

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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LITERATURE AND DEMOCRACY.

IN the introduction to his history of the century which is linked with the name of Louis the Fourteenth, Voltaire explains his view of that epoch with his usual clearness and certainty. For him it is, in brief, the age of perfection. For every thinking man, he says, there are only four centuries in the history of the race, and of these he reckons the one at the close of which he was born as undoubtedly the greatest. If it did not surpass in every art the age of Alexander, of Augustus, and of the Medici, it yet reached a higher standard of general perfection than had ever before been attained. It is not possible for us to take quite so exalted a view as this of our own times. All through the century we have been subject to alternate spasms of complacency and despair; at one moment we have been ready to proclaim the millennium, and at another we have questioned whether any millennium can possibly be in store for our distracted world. But if in our most optimistic mood we shrink from describing it as an age of perfection, we seldom hesitate to call it an age of progress. This is its most generally accepted designation, and it is the happiest compromise between modesty and hopefulness that we can discover. We have not reached the goal but we are proceeding towards it, and that at no mean rate; we may dwell upon the first or second clause of the

sentence according as our mood is arrogant or depressed.

In some ways we have every right to felicitate ourselves; in many directions,—in practical science, in material prosperity, in philanthropic enterprise, for instance—there has been an advance of a steady and very beneficent kind. In preventive medicine alone enough has been done during the last five-and-twenty years to earn the enduring gratitude of all those who are concerned (and who is not?) in the suffering of humanity. We have certainly succeeded in making ourselves far more comfortable than we have ever been before, and to a generation as sensitive to pain as ours this is no small thing. It is only when we turn from the practical and material to life's other aspects that we find ourselves in a less confident frame of mind.

The age of which Voltaire wrote was dominated by the prince who gave it his name; the epoch which completed and crowned the system of centralisation, for which Richelieu had cleared the ground and dug the foundations, was emphatically the King's century. The rule of Louis the Fourteenth extended far beyond the general domain of government; he was not much more supreme in questions of politics than in questions of taste, and the intellectual and artistic movements of the time can hardly be viewed apart from their

relation to the throne. His crowded reign of seventy-two years drew at last to a calamitous end, and the people he had ruined flung gibes and curses at his coffin as it passed unwept to St Denis. But the literature of the reign survived the wreck of the splendid fabric of which it had been the stateliest column; and the greatest names in French letters still shield from contumely and oblivion the memory of the sovereign who made their triumphs his own. He was not wanting to their glory; they are not wanting to his. In spite of the passionate loyalty which acknowledged,—it could not repay—a life of incomparable devotion to the nation's service, we can perceive in our own time no parallel to the influence which was exercised by royalty in the age of Louis the Fourteenth; no such harmonious atmosphere as that influence produced, no such sense of unity and coherence pervades the period we are considering. Among the shifting currents of modern ideas, the democratic sentiment is the one which may be traced most plainly; and diffusion, not concentration, is the democratic aim. It is not unusual to speak of the Victorian Era as though it represented a single period (with sub-divisions) in our literary history, but this appearance of unity is only to be gained by a rather arbitrary arrangement of facts. To make a revolution in thought, or a new development in art, fit into such convenient divisions of time as a reign or a century is a practice which cannot but commend itself to every orderly mind; and when to this chronological instinct is added the desire to link our age with a beloved and very great name, the temptation becomes almost irresistible. But the practice is more natural than accurate, since to the absence of any central authority uniting or determining the

lines along which art and literature have travelled, we must add an acceleration in the pace at which we move. We are mentally and spiritually more remote from the early Victorian than might have been expected reckoning only by dates, and the appearance of *THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES* (in 1859) draws a sharper line of intellectual demarcation across the century than the Queen's accession or the appearance in the same year of Lockhart's *LIFE OF SCOTT* and *THE PICKWICK PAPERS*. The literary splendours which make us feel so content with ourselves in our retrospective musings belong almost entirely to the first twenty-five years of the reign; we are living to-day upon reputations which were made over half a century ago.

The fifteen years which preceded the Queen's accession were years of transition, but they do not show any definite interruption in our literary sequence, or any very long pause in production. Silence had fallen upon the group of poets who had filled the opening years of the century with music. Keats died in 1821, Shelley in 1822, Byron in 1824; and by that date the task of Coleridge and Wordsworth was all but done. But Scott and Hallam were still at work, and the new voices were already audible; those years which have lately been described as the flattest and most unproductive of the century gave us not only *QUENTIN DURWARD*, *THE TALISMAN*, *THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH*, and Landor's *IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS*, but also *SARTOR RESARTUS*, Browning's *PAULINE*, Tennyson's first volume (*POEMS CHIEFLY LYRICAL*), and fifteen of Macaulay's essays. These heralded a wave of extraordinary energy which reached its height soon after the middle of the century,—the year 1855 saw the publication of Browning's *MEN AND*

WOMEN, THE NEWCOMES, MAUD, WESTWARD HO, the third and fourth volumes of Macaulay's HISTORY OF ENGLAND, and the completion of Grote's HISTORY OF GREECE—and receding a few years later left us all the work of Thackeray, the Brontës, Macaulay, Mrs. Browning, Borrow, and Fitzgerald, and the best work of Tennyson, Ruskin, Carlyle, Dickens, Froude, Kingsley, Browning, and George Eliot; and to these we must add the lovely cadences in which the age heard a new note of vain aspiration and vain regret with which (though never again so exquisitely as in Arnold's poems) it was afterwards to become very familiar. If ever there was a moment when we might have been permitted to contemplate our literary position with calm satisfaction, it should surely have been at a time when we had just been enriched with such costly and various treasures as those which are recalled by this list of names. This brilliant period, however, had not closed before we were startled by a voice which denounced in incisive tones not only our greed and our stupidity, our materialism and our narrow-mindedness, but our lack of literary taste and intellectual conscience. The first part of the message was not altogether strange. The Victorian Era had already had its prophets; it had listened more or less attentively to Carlyle's resonant utterances and to Ruskin's splendid phrase, to the one preacher who bade us seek salvation in lifting our eyes to the Eternal and Infinite, and to the other who prayed us to leave off contemplating our trade-returns and cleanse our minds by the vision of beauty incarnate in leaf and cloud. It had been left to Arnold to suggest a third way of combating the Anglo-Saxon vice of materialism. "The way of intellectual deliverance," said he, "is the

peculiar demand of ages which are called modern. Such a deliverance is emphatically the demand of the age in which we ourselves live."

Considering what those twenty-five years had done for us, it seems at first sight as though the prophet had made a mistake; surely so far as literature was concerned, it was not the moment to reproach us with our national shortcomings. And yet when we look again we see plainly that Arnold was right. The years which had so greatly enriched our literature had also produced a large class of readers for whom literature had no significance at all. A century ago a comparatively small class was interested in letters, and writers of that day addressed a cultivated and critical audience. The circle had widened considerably when Arnold wrote, and the increase in the number of readers had already resulted in the formation of two publics which might then have been briefly distinguished as the people who read Tupper and the people who read Tennyson,—those who liked to see their own mediocrity reflected in books, and those who sought in books a refuge from mediocrity,—from their own, as well as any other. The latter was of course very much the larger of the two, and it was to it that Arnold's exhortations were chiefly, though not exclusively, addressed; it was in their ears that he reiterated his assurance that if we could only get to know on the matters which most concern us the best that has been thought and said in the world, it would be impossible to retain unamended the stock notions and habits which he found so extremely distasteful. Arnold's influence upon his generation was weakened by the too classic bent of his mind, by a want of sympathy with the attitude of others; it was hard for him not to confound convictions he did not share with prejudices he

despised. The critic, it has been said, may have preferences but no exclusions, and he had many. Roused, however, by his taunts, we attempted to exchange materialism tinged by religion for materialism tempered by culture. Moved by a generous concern for those to whom "the best that has been thought and said in the world" was unknown, and likely to remain so without special intervention, we have expended much energy in writing primers and arranging epitomes; history has been sliced into epochs and theology compressed into magazine-articles; we have enabled a great many people to claim a casual acquaintance with eras of literature and systems of art; we have not implanted in them, with any marked success, either the scholarly temper or the literary conscience. This is to say that we have not yet found any means of reconciling literary and democratic ideals.

In the popular attitude as regards literature, two defects are constantly visible,—impatience of authority and indifference to form. In their hostility to the old order, the leaders of the intellectual revolt of the eighteenth century recognised one striking exception; in their determined and triumphant attack upon authority, literary precedent was singled out as the object of particular reverence. Voltaire imposed his own sense of the dignity of letters upon his contemporaries, and the disintegrating theories of the age were let loose upon the world in language of singular restraint and precision; the antique bases of society were shattered, but the dogma of the dramatic unities was preserved intact. In the reaction which followed the revolt, the dethroned and mutilated statues were hastily replaced upon their pedestals; men turned with relief from the monstrous sentimentality of the Revo-

lution to a saner and sincerer view of life. Chateaubriand's seductive pages brought Christianity again into fashion; romance resumed and extended her sway; souls, sickened and dismayed by the shattering of high ideals, sought healing for their wounds in a sacramental communion with nature. In the general revulsion of sentiment the one authority which the age of Voltaire had revered was in its turn rejected or ignored; in its eager protest against threadbare formality, literature lost something of its regard for form; in its new ardour for liberty, it shook off too impatiently its traditional reticence and self-restraint. To these defects the very wealth of the early part of the reign contributed. In its bewildering diversity of gifts, there were so many styles to admire that style was a little overlooked; and though it may seem paradoxical to accuse of neglect of form the epoch which numbers among its achievements Landor's stately harmonies, the deliberate and exquisite art of Tennyson, and the clear gravity of Newman, to name no lesser names, it is still certain that the influence of many of our great writers has tended on the whole to weaken the literary scruples of their successors. Men of genius have forced us to admire them in spite of their style: it has been proved to us very effectively that a man may be slovenly, obscure, unintelligible, and yet a great writer; and our splendid years, unlike the age of Louis the Fourteenth, have bequeathed to us many masterpieces but very few models. This harmonises precisely with the temper of the time which is more and more disposed to estimate a writer's position either by individual liking or by popular vote; and this is not to be wondered at, since for the mass of readers no other criterion is within

reach. They have no desire to violate the canons of taste; they are not aware of their existence. For the just appreciation of literature, as of music and painting, the trained ear and eye are essential. A man may be born with the critical faculty, but no man is born a critic; and for those who combine, as is the popular habit, a feverish desire for knowledge with a yet more feverish impatience of study, whose wish to reach the journey's end is united to an insuperable aversion to the fatigues of the road, it is unfortunately impossible to repair the omission. Sir George Trevelyan has told us that, when the first two volumes of Macaulay's History were published (in 1848), "at Dukinfield, near Manchester, a gentleman invited his poorer neighbours to attend every evening after their work was finished and read the History aloud to them from beginning to end. At the close of the last meeting, one of the audience rose and moved, in north-country fashion, a vote of thanks to Mr. Macaulay 'for having written a history which working men can understand.'" So diligently have we cultivated a habit of restless mental inconsequence that it would not be easy at the present day to find any audience which would listen to a work as long as Macaulay's History from beginning to end; a selection of entertaining passages would be all that any one would venture to propose.

With the immense increase in the demand for something to read which the last twenty or thirty years have witnessed, the intellectual deliverance for which Arnold sighed has grown still more remote, and to our older defects the last thirty years have added a steady decline in creative force and a continual narrowing of the range of imaginative vision. They are rich in essays and monographs, in historical research, and in philo-

sophical and critical studies; that is to say, in those forms of literary activity with which the mass of readers is in no way concerned; but between history and literature the breach grows wider; and in fiction and poetry what names have we to set against those which have been cited as belonging to the first years of the reign? As the century grows older it grows poorer. The best work of Rossetti, William Morris, Mr. Swinburne, and Coventry Patmore was completed some thirty years ago; it is forty years since *THE ORDEAL OF RICHARD FEVEREL* was published, thirty since *LORNA DOONE*, and twenty since *JOHN INGLESANT*; a long stretch of road divides *UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE* from *JUDE THE OBSCURE*; and Stevenson's sun went down while it was yet day. We still have Mr. Kipling, but no lover of England and English literature can help observing him with a somewhat apprehensive eye. From *THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING* to *THE DAY'S WORK* AND *STALKY AND CO.* is a dismal descent, and we watch with anxiety for what is to happen next. Our hopes for the future of poetry hang upon a host of minor poets, each week adding to their number, but not to their quality. In fiction the absence of distinction is so marked at present that he who should undertake to name the best half-dozen novelists of the moment would resemble the man who made a hole in the dyke because he wanted a pailful of water, and found too late that he had admitted the ocean. In connection with the popular novelists, one circumstance must be noticed at the risk of seeming ungracious to those who have given us a good deal of entertaining reading. The popular author's first work is almost invariably his best. We have perhaps no right to insist that, because a man has written one good book, he

must have it in him to write another ; and still the fact remains that during the last decade or two we have seen a considerable amount of promise unfollowed by any fulfilment ; the first book is generally not only fresher and brighter than the second and the twenty-second, but also less slipshod in construction and less meagre in design. This is perhaps in part the fault of the critics, whose kindly anxiety to encourage rising talent sometimes leads them to persuade the climber that he has reached the summit while he is still only on the lower slopes of the hill. The young writer who is assured (as has recently been the case with a living poet) that the quality of his work is *Æschylean*, *Shakespearean*, *Virgilian*, *Miltonic*, *Sophoclean*, *Tennysonian*, and *Dantesque*, can hardly help believing, one may suppose, that his climbing days are done ; unless indeed these sonorous epithets should rather set him wondering whether his reviewers' memories of those great writers had not grown somewhat dim. But those who are tempted to blame the reviewers for expressing a sense of general excellence rather too emphatically should remember that critics are hardly less numerous than writers. We seem indeed to have returned to that time of which it was said, more pithily perhaps than elegantly :

No town can such a gang of critics
show ;
E'en boys turn up the nose they cannot
blow.

And where a great many people are talking at once, one must shout if one means to be heard.

To the increase in the number of readers we owe that curious incident in literary history, the rise of the novel. It was evident that without some miraculous change in our intellectual habits, if everybody was to

read, reading-matter must be presented in some shape that would make no demand upon the mental powers ; and the novel and the newspaper are the only means of meeting this requirement. When, about a century ago, Monk Lewis heard that his mother had written a novel and proposed to publish it, he was painfully agitated at the tidings. Not all the fame of *EVELINA* seemed to him enough to compensate a woman for the dangers entailed by an appearance in print. "I do most earnestly and urgently supplicate you," he says, "whatever be its merits, not to publish your novel. . . . It would do a material injury to Sophia ; and her mother's turning novel-writer would, I am convinced, not only severely hurt Maria's feelings but raise the greatest prejudice against her in her husband's family. As for myself, I really think I should go to the Continent immediately upon your taking such a step." "We have often been astonished," Jeffrey wrote, a few years later, "at the quantity of talent that may be found in those works of fiction . . . which are seldom regarded as titles to a permanent reputation" ; and one of Scott's objections to avow the authorship of *WAVERLEY* was his doubt whether it would be considered decorous for a Clerk of Session to write novels. These twin prejudices have disappeared so completely that we can hardly realise their existence ; at the present time it is said that a novel is published in this country for every day of the year, and for the majority of readers literature and fiction are interchangeable terms. In comparing the fiction of the earlier period with that of our own, we note a difference in the writers' position. "I was a bit puzzled," says Stevenson's Will o' the Mill, "whether it was myself or the world that was worth

looking into." We have for the most part decided in favour of ourselves; the less introspective and self-conscious generation for which Dickens and Thackeray wrote made a different choice. For Scott the world was full of stories waiting to be told; for Dickens and Thackeray, for Reade and Charles Kingsley it was full of human beings so interesting that they could not help talking about them. Life seems to press the stuff into their hands saying, "Do what you will with it, there is plenty more." This consciousness of wealth explains, it may be said in passing, the attitude of some writers to plagiarism. Instead of defending himself from charges of plagiarism, Byron ought, says Goethe, to have merely remarked, "What is there is mine, and whether I got it from a book or from life is of no consequence." He thought Scott had done quite right in borrowing a scene from *EGMONT* for *KENILWORTH*; he had made a good use of the loan, and no other question need be asked. "My Mephistopheles sings a song from Shakespeare, and why should he not?" For the climax of *WALLENSTEIN* Schiller too went to Shakespeare.

Gordon.—Er schläft,—O mordet nicht den heiligen Schlaf!

Buttler.—Nein, er soll wachend sterben.¹

We should have torn Goethe and Scott and Schiller in pieces for unscrupulous thieves; we are too poor not to be honest if we would preserve our reputations. But the men in whose quarries we are all wont to dig thought nothing of carrying home any good stone that pleased their fancy to build into their own walls.

¹ *G.*—He sleeps,—oh do not murder holy sleep!

B.—No, he shall die awake.

In Mr. Kipling's earlier work we find exactly this sense of being in such close communication with life that he has only to ask and have, but the same thing cannot be said of any other living writer of fiction. We live in a somewhat impoverished time when writers may be roughly divided into two classes, one of which has a creditable command of pleasant and picturesque expression but nothing very particular to say. To this class belongs the novelist who laments that the earlier comers have used up all the plots and all the periods; like the needy knife-grinder, he has no story to tell, and in default he goes up and down searching conscientiously for effective situations and convincing emotions, the straw of which his bricks must be made. Since life does not come to him, he goes rather dispiritedly in pursuit of life; instead of writing of what he has seen, he strains his eyes to see something that he may write about, no matter what,—a drain-pipe or a dust-bin may answer the purpose. If we take, for example, the historical novel which for some years past has been so much in fashion, it would seem, judging of course from internal evidence only, that the novelist begins by selecting his epoch; he then procures the best hundred and fifty books on the subject and reads them carefully, notebook in hand; when he has learned the names of the principal personages of the time and has jotted down turns of speech and specimens of costume appropriate to an archer or a highwayman or a damsel in distress, he adds a suitable proportion of scenery and dialogue and if possible a plot; and so the thing is done. We seem to observe, though not quite so plainly, the same process carried out sometimes in the case of novels that are not historical. First a becoming costume is selected and then a man is

found to fill it. Thackeray, we know, took some pains, when he was writing *THE VIRGINIANS*, to learn the colour of George Washington's waistcoat, but nothing in the book leads us to suppose that his conception of George Washington began with that historic piece of material; there is a difference not only in the goal but in the starting-point. This want of any intimate relationship to life is further betrayed by the narrow range of emotion which is dealt with in the pages of our contemporaries. If we are to believe these reporters, there are rarely more than three characters in the whole drama of existence,—the man, the woman, and the other woman; or the woman, the man, and the other man. Such a practice is incompatible with any clear vision of life and the meaning of life, and we are grateful to Stevenson for reminding us of this truth,—for this, and for how much more!

Writers of another class justify their existence on the ground that they deal not with imagination but with reality. Scott was a story-teller pure and simple; the generation that followed him was a little more self-conscious, a little more alive to the fact that the novelist has at his command a vehicle that may serve more than its primary purpose. Neither Dickens nor Thackeray was averse to improving the occasion, but the instruction or reproof which their stories convey is not an essential part of them. No one now reads Dickens,—no one probably ever did—to learn his views on the Court of Chancery or the working of the Poor Laws. The absorbing emotion of *JANE EYRE* and of *VILLETTE* left no room for any didactic motive, but Charles Reade and Kingsley and George Eliot were very much awake to their mission; and thenceforward we find the moralist and the story-teller more

and more hotly disputing possession of the novel. At present a large number of people write novels only because it is a convenient way of acquainting the world with their views on religious or social problems; they would just as soon write pamphlets or sermons if they had the same chance of being read. These works unfortunately labour very commonly under a double disadvantage: they are not pretty, and they have nothing to do with art; but nevertheless, the public swiftly recognised that this was just what was wanted, and turned forthwith with its anxious questionings to the writers who undertook, like the correspondence column in a ladies' journal, to answer enquiries upon every section of life on the easiest terms. Ought women to marry? Ought men to pray? For the reply to these and many other enigmas we have only to subscribe to Mudie's; and meanwhile the preacher, who seemed in danger of being ousted from his pulpit, has deftly turned his rival into his ally and takes the novel of the hour for his text. "I must keep up with them," says the breathless revolutionist as he hurries after the crowd; "I am their leader!"

In this wide diffusion of what is sometimes called literary taste many critics discover reason for much satisfaction. It is chiefly this circumstance which leads them to declare that literature has never held so proud a position as it does to-day. For every one who made authorship his profession at the beginning of the century, hundreds may now be counted. Everybody reads, almost everybody writes, and most of what is written is readable; the halfpenny newspapers alone enable millions to keep up with the march of intellect both at home and abroad. We cannot open a magazine without lighting

upon verses which would put Mrs. Hemans to shame: we are as intimate with Maaterlinck and Björnson as a fairly complete ignorance of foreign tongues will permit; and we blush to think that our parents revelled in *THE CHRONICLES OF BARSETSHIRE* and made each other birthday-presents of *PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY*. If further proof is wanted, look at the money that is in it! "The great prizes of the profession," says Sir Walter Besant, "are becoming every day greater and more numerous. In every club where men of letters are to be found there appear every year more who attempt the profession, and with an exception here and there they all seem to get on. The pecuniary prizes of popular success are very substantial and are increasing by leaps and bounds." What more do we want? Should any dubious spectator of these popular successes venture to enquire how many pounds of talent are a fair exchange for a grain of genius, or how many minor poets outweigh one major, he is informed that the only hindrance to particular distinction lies in our general excellence. In a less opulent age almost any one of our popular authors would be recognised as eminently good; it is only because the majority of his contemporaries are also eminently good that the impression made upon us is one of mediocrity.

Some such impression is undoubtedly made; and with every wish to be just to ourselves, it is hard to see which of our minor poets, graceful and charming though their verses are, would have sat in the seat, say, of Herrick or Gray, if he had only arrived at the banquet a little earlier. But there is no need to make ourselves very unhappy on this account, or to consider the position of English literature desperate because for the time being our writers are more prolific than distinguished, more melancholy than serious. It may at least be argued on the popular side, that if a man has nothing very particular to say, it does not matter very much how he says it; and it is also true that no carelessness is so exasperating as a pretentious and elaborate arrangement of words under which we can detect no flicker of thought. Yet when we reckon up the gains of the last sixty years, solid and important as they are, we must set in the opposite column the fact that we have taught a vast number of people to read and to think,—to read what is vulgar and slovenly, and to think there is no harm in it. In the mournful estrangement between literature and life we have lost much of the serenity, the composure, the breadth of view, the pure and deep delight in something greater than ourselves, which is literature's best gift to a nation.

THE SECRET OF IRELAND.

1. *MY NEW CURATE*; a Story gathered from the Stray Leaves of an Old Diary; by the Rev. P. A. Sheehan, P.P., Doneraile (Diocese of Cloyne). Boston, U.S.A., 1900.

2. *SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.*; by E. CE. Somerville and Martin Ross. With Illustrations by E. CE. Somerville. London, 1900.

A COUPLE of summers ago a party of us in the west of Ireland were idling through the vague interval that divides Sunday breakfast from a start for church. The house looked north-west on to a bay so landlocked that, for all one's eye could tell, it might have been a lake. Over against us, a matter of three miles off, rose a mountain, which practically filled the peninsula between our bay and the next inlet on that indented coast. It was an August day of blazing sunshine without a breath of wind; the surface of the water shone like glass, and across it came clear, but mellowed by distance, the sound of many voices and of creaking oars. The bay swarmed with currachs, and every curragh carried a full complement of passengers; for the lower slope of the mountain was dotted thick with cottages that shone white across the bay under the sunlight, in among their tiny patches of corn and potatoes,—patches where the crimson of wild loosestrife often over-mastered the yellow or the green—and from all these cottages the most devout of populations was streaming over to mass at the little chapel near our house. On the landward side the nearest place of worship in the little town on the coast-road would have been a matter of five Irish miles from most of them; so, except in days when a rowing-boat could scarcely live on the water,—and it is wild water that the folk there will not face in these contrap-

tions of tarred calico or canvas stretched on a willow frame—they cross the bay to their devotions. And a pleasant sight they were to see as the boat-loads entered the little creek just under the house, and pleasant their voices and laughter sounded; the men indeed were not looking their best, for a good proportion of them were black-coated, but the women were splendid, with their heads blue-shawled and their red or dark blue petticoats. How they were all going to fit into the little chapel to which there would be already gathering on foot the people from our side of the water, it was not easy to guess; but all through Ireland folk are used to be packed tight at mass on Sundays.

When their procession of boats was ended, we decided to follow their example, and pulled round to the shore within half a mile or so of the church,—a much more important-looking building than the chapel, and a much more comfortable spot on that baking day. There was good elbow-room, although the congregation was a large one, for that part of Ireland. There were two or three coast-guards with their families, a policeman from Ulster, our own numerous party, and the rector's belongings, and perhaps a score of other people from the great house five miles off. Dresses that would have been appropriate enough in Hyde Park on a summer afternoon looked, I thought, a trifle incongruous

in Connemara; and the ladies' maids and footmen were perhaps even more exotic. But the most incongruous figure of all was a stout square-built gentleman in a frock-coat, whose every gesture and angle spoke of the English manufacturing town, just as unmistakably as the whole dress and bearing of two men in the next pew testified to the retired British officer. After service, when there was the usual five minutes of assemblage outside the church-porch, the congregation was entirely innocent of brogue, and the gentleman in the frock-coat dropped something as he was speaking. The same kind of an assemblage might be found, I should say, at any station in India; and it would be just about as much in touch with the worshippers at the adjoining temple.

This was of course in Connemara, where virtually the whole resident gentry of the old stock has disappeared, and their houses, where they are tenanted at all, are let to shooting tenants. To a certain extent, I fancy, the same state of things can be observed in the Highlands,—but with differences. In the first place, the west of Ireland does not rival the Highlands as a game-preserve; shootings and fishings there can never fetch a reasonably good figure until you get rid of the population that crowds the chapels. In the second place, the Highlanders are only separated from the visitors who come to live among them by blood, by immemorial habits, by speech (in part), and by the great gulf of poverty. There is not the barrier of religion, the most difficult of all to surmount; a barrier that is felt, not in Connemara, where there is really no contact of the two persuasions, but throughout the country where Catholic and Protestant meet on equal terms and rub shoulders daily. It would be hard to exaggerate the separateness, the

cleavage, that runs through the whole country. Even in Dublin, where educated men of the two religions, but often of the same political creed, mix freely in their professions or their business, there is little social intercourse, little real intimacy. Broadly speaking, at Protestant houses you do not meet Catholics. They are kept apart by instinctive antipathies,—instincts maintained, no doubt, by the deliberate policy of the Catholic Church. But it is in the country parts, not in the towns, that a person, trying to understand what Ireland really is, what it hopes, fears, loves, or hates, becomes most acutely aware of the aloofness. It would be hardly too much to say that Catholics in Ireland form among themselves,—without intention and even without knowledge—a huge secret society amenable, like all secret societies, to a special code.

The historic genesis of this attitude is not hard to find. Throughout Ireland, on the whole, Protestants are the possessors, Catholics the dispossessed. They were dispossessed not less for their religion than for their race; and their religion is to-day in many cases, perhaps in most, the only mark of their separate origin. It has been the lasting bond, indeed the one and only positive link of union among them,—for hate is only a negative tie. Persecution and penalisation were directed against the religion, and in their clinging to what was attacked, they fell away hopelessly from the attacking force,—which was the law. And the secret law which grew up among them was so indissolubly bound up with their religion, that the religion could not, if it would, shake it off. Catholicism is a strong religion, perhaps the strongest in the world, but to no people in the world does it represent so much as to the Irish.

It is the one thing they retained. They lost their land, they lost their language, and with it their traditional culture, but they kept their religion; and when their religion ceased to be attacked, they kept the habits and the instinctive organisation that they acquired in defending it. The Irish peasant, who passes for an expansive confiding creature, is in reality the most reserved of human beings.

How much does the average gentleman living in rural Ireland know of the Catholic population? About the Catholic gentry I can say nothing: there were none at all in my own country when the Catholics were in a large majority of the voting population; but I suspect that the land-question has made a barrier hard to surmount. The gentry buy and sell with Catholics, they let land to them, they employ them; but the kind of institutions that upon occasion abolish class differences in England are absent in Ireland. Cricket is not played, except in the towns and not much there; the Irish climate does not conduce to cricket. Rugby football appears to be taking hold to some extent, but for the most part this also only is played in towns; the Gaelic game is exclusively cultivated by the peasants and shopkeepers, and I question if anyone could find a Protestant who had played Gaelic football. There remains hunting; and generally speaking there is probably more real intercourse over questions connected with horseflesh than over all other subjects put together between men of the two creeds. But, taking it all round, throughout Ireland wherever Catholics are in the majority the upper class are Protestants, separated from the lower class not so much by any great difference in the possession of money (since the successful shopkeeper is apt to be better off

than the average landlord) nor in education, as by a radical divergence in social code and religious creed.

Whoever has read one of the most amusing books of the last year or two will recognise that this is the state of things portrayed in the *EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.* In the ordinary parish there are three persons in the upper class who have specially close intercourse with all their neighbours,—the rector (for the Church of Ireland clergy as a rule do a deal of ministering to the Roman Catholic sick and poor), the dispensary doctor (if he happens to be a Protestant, which is increasingly rare in Catholic districts), and the stipendiary magistrate. And the clever ladies who wrote this book knew, as was natural that ladies of a famous Irish family should know, that the experiences of an Irish Resident Magistrate might reasonably be made to embrace the life of Irish society from top to bottom. But practically it is apparent that his experiences are of two distinct kinds. There are those in which he is an active participant, one of the players in a comedy, moved by the same sort of motives as the rest; such are all his dealings with the amiable Mr. Flurry Knox, with Flurry's grandmother, Mrs. Knox of Aussolas (a character no more exaggerated, I would venture to say, than the indisputable Flurry himself), and, generally, with the whole clan of Knoxes. These dealings have all of them to do with love or sport or horses, but primarily with sport. The society in which he moves contains the authorised sportsmen of the neighbourhood, and its most intimate relations with the other and larger society outside it and around it are contracted in the pursuit of sport. A gentleman's most familiar associate among the peasantry is apt to be some one like Slipper of these stories, a personage

who is poacher and gillie by turns. Slipper is a reprobate, but very often one's acquaintance of this kind may be a perfectly decent, virtuous, and sober person. The point, however, is this: where Protestant and Catholic see most of each other in Ireland is over sport; and in these cases, the Protestant shoots, the Catholic carries the bag; the Protestant hooks the salmon (if he can), the Catholic gaffs it. I should be the last to deny that real friendship grows up out of this relation; but the mere fact that people meet exclusively as employer and employed, or patron and client, stamps a special character on the intercourse. It is not the same thing as playing together on a side; rather the relation, in establishing itself, marks the essential separation.

Thus what you find reflected in this book, with an amusing distortion no doubt, but still reflected, are the manners of the Irish upper class. In so far as the book relates the magistrate's dealings with the Irish who are not of his circle, the Catholic Irish, the method of portrayal is quite different. The light thrown on the life of the peasantry is thrown from outside, showing chiefly their exclusiveness, and how little the magistrate really knows about them. Take for instance the only tragic story in the book, "The Waters of Strife." The magistrate has been attending a regatta in which he witnessed a race between a scratch crew in their shirt-sleeves and the representatives of the local football club, the Sons of Liberty, in their green jerseys. In the progress of the race the coxswain of the shirt-sleeved crew had occasion to strike an oarsman of the other boat over the head with his tiller and was cheered by a lad named Bat Callaghan, who watched the contest from the wheel of the magistrate's dog-cart. Bat was pulled down by a man in

a green jersey, but the fight was prevented by the police. Next morning the magistrate was informed by his factotum that the police were searching for one Jimmy Foley. There had been blood "sthrown" about the road at one point.

"Sure they were fighting like wasps in it half the night."

"Who were fighting?"

"I couldn't say, indeed, sir. Some o' thim low rakish lads from the town, I suppose," replied Peter with virtuous respectability. When Peter Cadogan was quietly and intelligently candid, to pursue an inquiry was seldom of much avail.

The police-inspector, however, reported that Foley's cap had been found drenched with blood, and opined that there must have been a dozen people looking on when the murder was done. No evidence was forthcoming, but some days later the police, acting on a hint shouted through the magistrate's window one dark night, discovered Foley's body in the river with the head battered in. About the same time Bat Callaghan was found to be missing. Nothing else happened; but a few months later Major Yeates, the magistrate, was in the barracks occupied by his old regiment when a rifle went off. A recently joined man was found in convulsions. On recovering he explained that he had fired his rifle at a face that haunted him; and then fresh convulsions came on and he died. He was of course Callaghan. There is nothing at all hard to believe in this story, except perhaps the effects of remorse. One would like to point out to the English reader that "the secret half a country keeps" is kept all the same, when the victim is not a bailiff, or the tenant of an evicted farm, but a member of the Sons of Liberty football-club in his green jersey. There is nothing surprising in the story of "The Holy Island,"—that delightful tale of hos-

pitiable Mr. Cauty and the smuggled rum. If barrels of rum are washed ashore from a wreck, no doubt they belong legally to the Crown, or to the insurance company, or some other vague entity; but it is only human nature to act as if the person who picked them up might dispose of the contents, and to refrain from informing a meddling police where the picker-up has bestowed them. And in Ireland, when one set of the people is playing a game through life in which the law and the police figure merely as forces that must be defeated or evaded, a kind of incarnate bad luck, naturally there is a kind of popular enthusiasm for the player who smuggles off his rum in fish-boxes under the very nose of the police and magistrates, by attaching a van to the special train that conveys the cortège of a defunct bishop. All that is human nature; but human nature must be strangely bitted and bridled by long custom when a man can be hammered to death with stones in a wayside fight, and his kith and kin in the most clannish of countries will not lift a hand to give the murderer up to justice. It is exactly the attitude of schoolboys towards the justice dispensed by their masters; just or not, they will not invoke it. The criminal law is a thing alien and hostile to the whole body of the community. No doubt, in a case like this, the Irish make far greater allowance than the law admits for the excitement of a fight. The heart of the people goes out in sympathy to combatants, as the authors of these *EXPERIENCES* explain in the phrase of a countryman, "Indeed, if it was only two cocks ye seen fightin' on the road, yer heart'd take part with one of them." But chiefly the reason is an instinctive hostility to the law. Things are in a transition stage. In the old days the matter would have rested till the

next faction-fight, and then the kinsmen of the Son of Liberty would have taken exemplary vengeance on Mr. Bat Callaghan, or failing him, on some other Callaghan. Now, these blood-feuds are mostly at an end. Such homicides are punished only by their own conscience, by the opinion of the community, and by the priest.

There one says the name of the strongest power in Ireland,—so long as there is no such overmastering personal ascendancy as Parnell's was—the factor of which least is known, and assuredly the greatest fount of knowledge if it were available. In every Catholic parish the priest is at the very heart of things. Quarrels, reconcilements, love-affairs, money-dealings,—all are familiar to him as his own personal concerns. And that is why any book about Ireland written by a priest should command attention, but more especially a book about the Irish Catholic clergy. I would not say that *MY NEW CURATE* is altogether admirable as a piece of literature; but it is a pleasant book to read, and it throws a new light on the life of Ireland.

Father Dan, who acts as the narrator, commentator, and chorus, is seventy years old. Long ago he has been sent by a kindly bishop to this outlandish, seaboard, Gaelic-speaking parish; for, as the bishop said, Father Dan "was a bit of a littérateur, and there would be plenty of time for poetising and dreaming at Kilronan." Nevertheless Father Dan had come to his parish with great resolutions. Not only would he read and write greatly, but he would put a new life into the people; he would build factories, pave the streets, establish a fishing-station, make Kilronan a favourite bathing-resort. He tells the result.

I might as well have tried to remove yonder mountain with a pitch-fork or

stop the roll of the Atlantic with a rope of sand. Nothing on earth can cure the inertia of Ireland. It weighs down like the weeping clouds on this damp heavy earth, and there's no lifting it nor dis-burthening the souls of men of this intolerable weight. I was met on every side with a stare of curiosity as if I were propounding something immoral or heretical.

Gradually Father Dan, being no fighter, succumbs and drifts like the rest; he sees himself in the evening of his days with nothing to show for his life but an absence of earthly trouble and some few consolations: "My breviary and the grand psalms of hope,—my daily mass and its hidden and unutterable sweetness—the love of little children and their daily smiles—the prayers of my old women, and, I think, the reverence of the men." The words are eloquent, and, what is better, they ring true, and they apply beyond the scope that is given them. Not the priests only, but the whole mass of the friendly, innocent, indolent Irish in distant corners of the country find the reward and the purpose of their lives in the consolations of human kindliness and sympathy and in the great anodyne of their religion. These things contribute their part, more perhaps than the very air of Ireland, to produce that inertia, that indifference to material progress, which is a form of mysticism. Side by side with the most living faith in the mysteries of Christianity goes the conviction which was written up in large letters over the mantelpiece of Father Dan's old curate, *'Twill be all the same in a hundred years.*

But the old curate had received a mandate from the bishop which transferred him from Kilonan to another parish twenty miles off. He had gone out among the tears of the villagers, with his untidy deal furniture roped on a cart, following at the tail of three loads of black turf; and Father

Dan, who had spoken lightly of the bishop's powers, was to get a new curate who would "break his heart in six weeks." And with the new curate came the first breath of a new order. Father Letheby was Irish born,—the son of a shopkeeper in a town not far from Kilonan—and Irish educated; but he had served for some years in Manchester, and he announced his arrival by sending in a card, to the amazement of Hannah, Father Dan's housekeeper. He was lodged at the presbytery, and the first result of his coming was that after breakfast next morning Father Dan sent out his razors to be set. The next was the insurrection of Mrs. Darcy the chapel-woman, who flounced in and threw her bunch of keys on the priest's table.

"Wisha, where in the world did you get him, or where did he come from, at all, at all? The son of a jook! [the first impression produced by the advent of the curate's furniture, including a piano in a pantechicon van] the son of a draper over there at Kilkeel. Didn't Mrs. Morarty tell me how she sowl'd socks to his ould father? An' he comes here complaining of dacent people! 'Dirt,' sez he. 'Where?' says I. 'There,' sez he. 'Where?' says I. I came of as dacent people as him."

But next Sunday the floor of the sacristy was waxed, the grate black-leaded, the little altar-boys were in snowy surplices, and Father Dan was confronted with a stiff white amice instead of the old limp and wrinkled one he was used to; and, to crown all, Mrs. Darcy answered his summons in a white apron laced at the edges and pinned to her breast. That was only the beginning. Soon the little boys and girls came out of school chanting their rosary together before they broke up for play. Father Letheby was a musician, and he organised concerts and took the choir in hand; and though Father Dan

kicked against the innovations, they commended themselves to him in spite of himself. He might preach *quieta non movere*, as the only wisdom for the west of Ireland; he might counsel his curate to moderate his pace; but still the young man's enthusiasms won on him: they reminded him of his own. Father Letheby was a scholar too, and Father Dan had some one to talk over his classics with. In the parish the curate's prowess with the ball, when he started the football matches, ensured popularity.

So much for the effect produced by the new curate on the priest and the parish. But Kilronan was not less strange to him than he to Kilronan. Almost his first experience was of a night call to a wild corner of the parish, while he was still at the presbytery, and Father Dan said a word of regret. But the curate was enthusiastic.

"I never saw anything like it. I had quite an escort of cavalry, two horsemen who rode side by side with me the whole way to the mountain, and then when we had to dismount and climb up through the boulders of some dry torrent course, I had two linkmen or torchbearers, keeping on the crest of the ditch on either side and lighting me right up to the door of the cabin. It was a picture that Rembrandt might have painted."

He paused and blushed a little as if he had been pedantic.

"But tell me, Father, is this the custom in the country?"

"Oh yes," said I, "we look upon it as a matter of course. Your predecessors didn't make much of it."

"It seems to me," he said, "infinitely picturesque and beautiful. It must have been some tradition of the Church when she was free to practise her ceremonies. But where do they get their torches?"

"Bog-oak steeped in petroleum," I said, "It is, now that you recall it, very beautiful and picturesque. Our people will never allow a priest with the Blessed Sacrament with him to go unescorted."

That impression of the fervour and devotion of these worshippers is re-

inforced again and again; yet with it go strange slovenliness and irreverences that terribly shock the newcomer. The worst of all happens after a Christmas celebration, at which Father Letheby has for the first time arranged a Bethlehem chapel to the intense joy and edification of the parish. The description of the effect upon the fervid Celtic imagination produced by the group of figures is too long to quote, but the writer conveys a fine sense of its force and depth. "It was as if God had carried them back over the gulf of nineteen centuries and brought them to the stable-door of Bethlehem that ever-memorable night. I think it is this realisation of the Incarnation that constitutes the distinguishing feature of Catholicity." But next day was St. Stephen's, when through all Catholic Ireland the "wren boys" go their rounds. Father Letheby was passing a public house and from inside he heard issuing the strains of the *Adeste* in the voice of his best, but his most drunken, chorister. He entered.

Leaning on the deal table, with glasses and pints of porter before them, as they sat and lounged or fell in various stages of intoxication, were the wren-boys; and near the fire with his back to the door, and his fingers beating time to the music in pools of dirty porter, was Jim Deady. As Father Letheby entered, he was singing

*Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine,
Gestant puellæ viscera—*

It is easy to believe that Jim Deady's unhappy instructor wanted to abandon his mission next day, and had to be roundly scolded by his superior.

In short it is easy to glean from this book some notion of a priest's high moments of exaltation, and black hours of discomfiture, over his purely religious work in Ireland. And on

the social side of it Father Sheehan is not less informing. The new curate has not been long in the parish before he runs up against men drilling by night and he reports the matter to the priest. Father Dan's attitude towards the secret society is noticeable. "I know," he said, "there are some fellows in the village in receipt of secret service money, and all these poor boys' names are in the Castle archives. But, what is worse, this means anti-clericalism, and consequently abstention from Sacraments and a long train of evils besides." Application to the police provides the priests with a list of all members of the society and the name of the informer. Father Letheby comes in on a drill and explains to the boys that they are sold, and Father Dan has a quiet interview with the informer. It all passes under the surface; but Father Letheby backs his argument by telling the rebels that their newspapers (the anti-clerical Nationalist journals) are owned by Freemasons and Jews; and Father Dan hints that the anti-Catholic agencies work in Ireland by the dissemination of pornographic literature. What seems to us the nightmare of Catholics on the Continent is not less keenly dreaded by the Irish priest; and that explains many things in politics. Nationalism that is to have loyal teaching from the Catholic Church must be Catholic first and Nationalist afterwards.

But there are other forces at work in Ireland now than the merely political ones, and the new curate enrols himself on their side. He is appalled by the Oriental languor of the Kilronan men, who will stand long hours together propped like posts against a wall, their hands in their pockets, scarcely opening their mouths to spit, much less to speak; and he goes into Father Dan's old projects, but with

a new energy and a new backing. There is a Board now that will advance part of the money to build a boat; and Father Letheby induces the Board to do so, that his parishioners may compete with the Frenchmen and the Manxmen for the fish. Moreover he induces the manager of a neighbouring shirt-factory to send down sewing-machines and work to be done on them; while he, on his own responsibility, takes an old mill for the girls to work in. The result of the two enterprises is a tragic failure. The *STAR OF THE SEA* founders, uninsured, on her trial trip, run down by a French steamer, with the suggestion of malice. One may doubt if in actual practice to-day such a thing could happen; the Board would see to insurance, and the foundering is not likely; though, if the enterprise had been worked in Father Letheby's way, and a big boat with nets to match had been given to line-fishermen, the result would have been not much better: boat and nets would have rotted. They manage these things better now; the work of the priests is merely to induce their people to avail themselves of the chances offered, and very well they do it in many cases. Sometimes, too, no doubt, they have to back their recommendations by an offer of security, and they may perhaps have Father Letheby's unfortunate experience. But the matter of the factory is more typical. The manager who sent down the work reported that it was ill done and unsaleable; and the girls replied with grumbling. Moreover when a press of orders came in, the workers objected that the day was a holiday, and went off to keep it. The ill-conditioned minority overruled the majority, and hinted that "the priest was turning a good penny by it." The result was a demand for payment on the machines

and no money forthcoming. That is extremely like the career of most philanthropic experiments of the sort in Ireland. Everywhere the peasantry meet the efforts to provide work for them with the suspicion that the philanthropist is wanting to make money out of them unfairly; but nevertheless it happens again and again that business men come in and erect a thriving concern out of the wreckage left by the philanthropist.

This, however, wanders from the point, which is that on the whole throughout Ireland at present the priest is apt to be the pioneer of industrial enterprise, or at least a potent aid. It would be truer to say that the priest of the new generation is so; the older men, with noble and notable exceptions, incline to Father Dan's axiom of *quieta non movere*, and his social pessimism. Perhaps the most interesting chapters in the book are those called "A Clerical Symposium" and "The May Conference." The latter sketches the different types of belief at present existing; the discussions of ceremonial, the more exciting discussion of Biblical criticism, beginning with a young priest's paper which, as Father Dan sums it up, "left us to think that by something called Ritschlian interpretations the whole Bible was knocked into a cocked hat." Father Sheehan has no sympathy with the higher criticism, and his new curate defends with fervour the theory of direct inspiration; but one did not realise that the higher criticism had reached Kilmannan, or that a country priest in Ireland would speak of the *Magnificat* as a "literary composition." The changes have come with the last in three generations of Irish priests that an old man can remember. Father Dan's early memories go back to "polished studious timid priests, who, educated in Continental seminaries,

introduced into Ireland all the grace and dignity and holiness, and all the dread of secular authority, with the slight tendency to compromise" of the French clergy. Upon these followed the brood of Maynooth, fierce fighters for the temporal as well as the spiritual interests of their people:

Men of large physique and iron constitutions, who spent ten hours a day on horseback, despised French claret, loved their people and chastised them like fathers. . . . They had the classics at their fingers' ends, would roll out lines from Virgil or Horace at an after-dinner speech, and had a profound contempt for English literature. In theology they were rigorists, too much disposed to defer absolution and to give long penances. They had a cordial dislike for new devotions, believing that Christmas and Easter communion was quite enough for ordinary sanctity.

And behind these is "the coming generation of Irish priests, clean cut, small of stature, keen-faced, bicycleriding, coffee-drinking, encyclopædic young fellows," regarded with a tolerant pity by the older men, who "have as much contempt for coffee as for ceremonies." And yet, as Father Dan admits, the future is with the young men, and in his judgment they can make good use of it; they lack neither energy nor devotion, whether to their faith or their country. And they belong, every one of them, "to that great world-wide organisation of Priest Adorers which, cradled in the dying years of our century, will grow to a gigantic stature in the next." On such matters a layman and a Protestant has no right to speak; yet it is safe to say that if Father Letheby, with his enthusiasm, and his good will to use religion in the service of outward decency and material progress, stands for a fair type of the new generation among priests, then the influence of the Church is not likely to weaken in Ireland. But it

will remain an influence that no lover of freedom can altogether approve; and already, as the concession of Local Government operates, there comes into being a national life where the priest must almost of necessity come into collision with his people. Hitherto, the political question has for the most part been simple; priest and people alike desired and voted for a particular legislative measure which they were powerless to obtain. They were agreed that the Irish people should have power over its affairs in Ireland, but when it comes to using the power there may be divergences; the issue grows complicated. And the priestly conception of Irish society is one in which authority everywhere prevails, children being subject to their parents, and parents being subject to their priest. Father Dan and his curate are at one in thinking that the Christian ideal of marriage was best realised in Ireland, at least up to recent times.

There was no lurid and volcanic company-keeping before marriage, and no bitter ashes of disappointment after; but the good mother quietly said to her child, "Mary, go to confession to-morrow, and get out your Sunday dress. You are to be married on Thursday evening." And Mary said, "Very well, mother," not even asserting a faintest right to know the name of her future spouse. But then, by virtue of the great sacramental union, she stepped from the position of a child and a dependant into the regal position of queen and mistress on her own hearth. . . . Married life in Ireland has been, up to now, the most splendid refutation of all that the

world and its gospel, the novel, preach about marriage, and the most splendid and complete justification of the supernaturalism of the Church's dogmas and practices.

One rubs one's eyes on reading a passage like that. But facts are facts, and by any generally accepted test it must be allowed that the institution of marriage works better in Catholic Ireland than anywhere in Christendom; though the Irish peasant, in taking a wife, acts generally on the principle that there is not "the odds of a cow between any one woman and another." The cause assigned by Father Dan is not that to which a Protestant would assign the fact, but his is apparently the view taken by orthodox Catholics, a view of life so unlike ours that we are left gasping in conjecture before it. Yet if one thinks a little, the very incomprehensibility of such an attitude is in itself a clue; we begin to realise vaguely why Catholic Ireland is so hard to understand, and we can guess that the priests inherit a knowledge of its secret. They read instinctively the heart of a country that has never grown up, of a people that is still in tutelage. What will be their place and part in an Ireland that has achieved a really national life, that has ceased to believe in a millennium brought about by legislative enactment, must yet be seen. But for the present they, if any class, are the keepers of the secret of Ireland.

STEPHEN GWYNN

STUDIES IN SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORY.

IV. HENRY THE EIGHTH.

It has been very generally held that *THE FAMOUS HISTORY OF KING HENRY THE EIGHTH* was not written by Shakespeare, or at least that only part of the play is his and the rest the work of a weaker hand. There are considerable grounds for this belief. The play, compared with the rest of Shakespeare's historical plays, is so wanting both in plot and character, especially after the fall of Wolsey, that it is almost impossible to believe that Shakespeare is wholly responsible for it. There was, for one thing, so much material ready to his hand exactly suited to his genius. The tragic fate of Katharine of Aragon, or the life and death of Wolsey, would naturally suggest themselves to him as subjects for a tragedy in the style of *RICHARD THE SECOND*; and there is something very plausible in the suggestion that he did devise such a play, and had perhaps already sketched its outline, when circumstances compelled him to entrust the completion of his design to Fletcher or some other. If it were possible to believe that the play was written during the lifetime of Elizabeth, it would be easy to understand why the natural treatment of the subject was rejected. It would have been worse than rash to speak plainly of Queen Katharine's fate, or to question the righteousness of her divorce under Elizabeth; a just appreciation of Wolsey would hardly have been tolerated in an England which, with absurd blindness, regarded him as the great representative of Romish

tyranny. Shakespeare himself would not have dared to be so bold, and might even have been induced to append the concluding scenes of the play, with their somewhat fulsome eulogies of Elizabeth, to atone for what there is of real feeling displayed in the stories of Katharine and Wolsey.

It is, however, certain from contemporary evidence that the play was regarded as a new one in 1612, and the fear of Elizabeth could not have lasted so long into the reign of James the First. Perhaps, therefore, the most satisfactory theory is that the play is a compilation of a number of fragments written in the time of Elizabeth, some by Shakespeare and the rest by someone else, and that it was put together in the reign of James the First by some author unknown.

The facts that it is included in all editions of Shakespeare, even in the first collected edition, that there is much in the play which is Shakespearian in tone and feeling and of permanent value and interest, and that the denial of Shakespeare's authorship is still heretical, are sufficient justification for discussing it among his plays. Indeed no study of the historical plays would be complete without it. I shall, then, in this paper continue to speak of Shakespeare as the author, whenever it is necessary to mention the author by name.

It is an abrupt transition from Richard the Third to Henry the

Eighth, from Bosworth to the king's ante-chamber, from civil war to court intrigue. Henry the Seventh had done his work so thoroughly that the twenty-four years of his reign were sufficient to change entirely the nature of English politics. Civil war was no longer possible, the "overmighty subject" was suppressed for ever, and England was handed over from the anarchy of the nobles to the despotism of the Crown. The futility of any hope on the part of the nobles to make head against the royal power was shown by the execution of the Duke of Buckingham, whom a few wild words sufficed to ruin. The possession of power involved not only complete subservience to the royal will, but the ability also and the want of principle necessary to carry it out, however foolish and however wicked; Wolsey, More, and Cromwell one after another fell victims to the exigencies of a position which no minister could support.

In the building up of such a despotism the political reformation of the Church was an inevitable incident. A semi-independent corporation, which, ever since the days of Anselm, had carried on a chronic warfare with the Crown for the maintenance or extension of its liberties, was an anomaly which could never have been suffered to exist within the Tudor system. It was not only a relic of popular liberty but a nucleus, a cause round which discontent always could and, as a matter of fact, did gather. It is this determination of Henry the Eighth to achieve a complete autocracy, whose symmetry should be marred by no exception, which was the real origin of the English Reformation; the question of the divorce was only the occasion.

The subjects then of the play
HENRY THE EIGHTH are the King

and the Reformation, treated quite generally, from no particular point of view, and without any leading idea to give unity to its episodes. This very general disinterested treatment goes far towards spoiling the dramatic interest of the play; its real value lies in the grandeur of a few passages, the power of a few situations, the insight, though only occasionally displayed, into the characters of the King and Wolsey. Henry the Eighth is not himself the hero of the play which bears his name; his life and character, entirely without any element of tragedy or romance, wholly unfit him for the position. The two chief characters in the first four acts are Katharine and Wolsey; while the last, being in the nature of an epilogue and having little connection with the preceding acts, is only dramatic in form, its subject being a panegyric on the Reformation and a prediction of the greatness of Elizabeth.

Wolsey naturally occupies the foremost place in the play, just as he really did in the first half of the reign of Henry; he was more of a king than the King himself, as Erasmus says. He it is who cuts down Buckingham, in his determination to allow no opposition to his will. He was forced to attempt the downfall of Katharine in order to gratify his master's lust; and his failure to be of any real assistance to Henry's plan brought with it his own ruin. Shakespeare appears not to have fully appreciated Wolsey's character: his ambition and his power he understood, and his magnanimity in misfortune; but the true greatness of his character he failed to see, nor did he understand the wisdom of his statesmanship. To combine what was best of the cautious policy of Henry the Seventh with the wider activity which a new age and the young sovereign's ambition

demand, to lead or bribe the King, when possible, into wise courses, to minimise the bad results of Henry's follies when to influence him was impossible,—these are only some of Wolsey's achievements, but they are sufficient to give him a place among the greatest English statesmen. Yet Shakespeare seems half to sanction Buckingham's furious onslaught on him, in which he accuses him of arranging Henry's meeting with Francis the First on the Field of the Cloth of Gold,

Only to show his pomp as well in France
As here at home,

while he insinuates that Charles the Fifth's interview with Henry at Canterbury was only brought about by the bribery of the Cardinal.

But when the way was made,
And paved with gold, the emperor thus desired
That he would please to alter the
king's course,
And break the foresaid peace.

This is unjust. No doubt Wolsey derived his own advantages from his relations with the sovereigns of Europe; the bribery of a minister was only an ordinary incident in the diplomacy of that day, and Charles the Fifth could dazzle Wolsey with no less a bribe than the hope of the Papacy. It is also true that he affected great pomp in all his public dealings. But his policy was no more governed by considerations of personal gain than his display was due to personal vanity. Henry the Eighth would have England great, powerful and respected; so would Wolsey. But while Henry hankered after conquests and military glory, Wolsey saw clearly that such a course could bring England no real advantages. The position which Wolsey desired for England was that which James the First afterwards coveted for himself, namely the office of arbiter in European disputes; but

while James had not the wit to fill such a position, Wolsey's policy was for several years successful. And for success in such an attempt it was absolutely necessary for him to trim between the two great rivals Charles the Fifth and Francis the First. The meeting at Guisnes was arranged with the object of preventing the outbreak of war between Henry and Francis; the interview at Canterbury was intended to assure the Emperor that England was still faithful to his interests, and that the demonstration at Guisnes did not commit her to the French King's side. And the Emperor's friendship was at this time of more real value to England, as well as to Wolsey, than that of France. As for his love of pomp and splendour, they were the custom of the day, necessary for the dignity of a great king's minister and not without their value as a political asset.

In the second scene of the first act Wolsey is still more unjustly used. Queen Katharine complains to Henry of oppressive taxation, imposed by the Cardinal, which is causing discontent all over the country, and then, when the King orders the commission of taxation to be revoked, Wolsey bids the secretary see to it that the credit of the revocation shall be his. Throughout this scene Wolsey is made to appear unscrupulous and extortionate, while the King is full of generous impulses and unknowingly is led into tyrannical courses by his minister.

Q. Kath. (to Wolsey).

These exactions,
Whereof my sovereign would have
note, they are
Most pestilent to the hearing; and, to
bear 'em,
The back is sacrifice to the load. They
say
They are devised by you; or else you
suffer
Too hard an exclamation.

* * * *

King. By my life,
This is against our pleasure.

* * *

To every country
Where this is question'd send our
letters, with
Free pardon to each man that has
denied
The force of this commission: pray,
look to 't;
I put it to your care.

Wolsey. A word with you. (*To the Secretary.*)
Let there be letters writ to every shire,
Of the king's grace and pardon. The
grieved commons
Hardly conceive of me; let it be
noised
That through our intercession this
revokement
And pardon comes: I shall anon
advise you
Further in the proceeding.

This is of course the orthodox attitude of Elizabethan Protestantism towards Wolsey. The Queen's father was not one to be spoken lightly of: some other must be made to bear the blame of his tyrannical acts; and who so fitting as the Cardinal of Rome who failed to procure that most righteous divorce, which made the daughter of Anne Boleyn not only legitimate but Queen of England? It was doubtless also the attitude of Wolsey's contemporaries towards him. No minister has ever been so completely his sovereign's scape-goat as he. Forced to carry out the King's policy at all costs, he was constantly obliged to make the best of actions of which he thoroughly disapproved, extricate the King from difficulties into which his folly had brought him, and take upon himself the unpopularity of Henry's measures. The King must have money; Wolsey must screw it out of the people; and then, when it is found impossible to make them pay more, the King gracefully yields to his subjects' will and expresses benevolent surprise at his

minister's cruelty. Such was Wolsey's true position and very different from that which Shakespeare appears inclined to attribute to him.

The serious side of Wolsey's political life during the time of his prosperity was perhaps misunderstood by Shakespeare. It is when he draws him as the splendid nobleman, the magnificent host winning his sovereign's favour with gorgeous entertainments, and when, in the story of his fall, he emphasises the real nobility of Wolsey's character, that he displays a true appreciation of the man's greatness, while he perhaps at the same time reveals his own secret opinion of King Henry's merits. It is a fine piece of fooling, the arrival of the masquers at York Place, the Cardinal's pretended ignorance as to who they are, the dancing and the King's good humour, though there is one lady among the guests to whom he is too kind and who will one day rue his kindness.

You're welcome, my fair guests: that
noble lady,
Or gentleman, that is not freely merry,
Is not my friend: this, to confirm my
welcome;
And to you all, good health.

Could a welcome be offered more gracefully or with more genial hospitality? Well might the King exclaim on unmasking:

You hold a fair assembly; you do
well, lord;
You are a churchman, or, I'll tell you,
cardinal,
I should judge now unhappily.

Henry the Eighth had at least the virtue of good-fellowship; he loved to take his pleasure in company. To quote his own words;

Company methinks the best
All thoughts and fancies to digest.
For idleness

Is chief mistress
Of vices all:
Then who can say
But mirth and play
Is best of all?

But the man is an inveterate prig.
Notice how even in this song, in
which he expresses his real geniality,
he can never forget his morals.

Company with honesty
Is virtue and vice to flee.

He is the completely selfish man, crammed full of principles, with a thoroughly respectable mind, and yet always desiring to do things which are not respectable, and which his really considerable faculty for casuistry has to bring into a forced agreement with his principles. He is like the man who must needs always consider the commercial value of everything; only with him the commercial value is spiritual. Even Froude was forced to admit that his hero might have been a better man if he had never studied theology in his youth, and thus been encouraged to consider himself an authority on all questions of divinity and morals. His conscience is so persistent as to become wearying, and the skill with which he argues himself into thinking his worst actions virtuous only makes those actions the more revolting. It is sometimes almost impossible to believe that he really did bring himself to think the eighteen years of married life to his brother's widow sinful, and that he was making his sin any the less by cruelly divorcing her when she was no longer young and he no longer loved her. There is something almost ludicrous in the attitude of a mind which could believe that the gratification of a passion could be turned into a virtuous act by means of the rejection of a wife, concerning his marriage with whom eighteen years before there might be

some small technical legal doubt. Yet of the sincerity of his belief there can be little question. Shakespeare makes his hypocrisy the more repulsive by his pretence of constancy to Katharine and unwillingness to lose her. He cries to Wolsey:

O, my Lord,
Would it not grieve an able man to
leave
So sweet a bedfellow? But conscience,
conscience!
O, 'tis a tender place; and I must
leave her.

There are not many blessed with such a convenient conscience.

But Henry was a clever man and could argue plausibly in open court, and there were no doubt many convinced by him. He describes how the doubt of the French ambassador, who was treating for the marriage of Mary to the Duke of Orleans, as to the legitimacy of the Princess first troubled his conscience; the ambassador demanded a respite during which to put the matter before his master.

This respite shook
The bosom of my conscience, enter'd
me,
Yea, with a splitting power, and made
to tremble
The region of my breast; which forced
such way,
That many mazed considerings did
through
And press'd in with this caution.

Thus hulling in
The wild sea of my conscience, I did
steer
Towards this remedy, whereupon we
are
Now present here together; that's to
say,
I mean to rectify my conscience,—
which
I then did feel full sick, and yet not
well,—
By all the reverend fathers of the land
And doctors learn'd.

This exposure of the royal conscience

must have been very edifying to the court, and he may even have convinced others, as he certainly did himself.

It is a curious double tragedy that of Wolsey and Katharine, the fate of each being apparently so gratuitous and unnecessary, and each causing the other. It was Wolsey who was compelled by the King to degrade himself at Rome and in the eyes of all Europe by attempting to persuade the Pope to grant the divorce; and it was he who, though against his will, by working so long for the divorce accustomed men's minds to the idea of it and so made it easy for Cranmer to take the final step. And, just as Wolsey unwillingly ruined Katharine, so did she involuntarily bring about his fall. Shakespeare attributes his disgrace to the accidental interception by the King of certain incriminating documents; but really it was his failure to secure the Pope's consent to the divorce which made Henry think that he no longer had any use for him, and gratitude for past services had of course no weight with him.

Queen Katharine was probably not a very attractive lady, cold, serious, strictly religious, and somewhat haughty. But she was a good woman and possessed considerable intellectual ability; she was sincerely attached to Henry, and it is certain that for years he really loved her and was much under her influence. It was an unchivalrous age which could tolerate his treatment of her; for, though his desire for a male heir was a motive which all statesmen could understand, the want of feeling displayed by the King towards her might well have exasperated even the politic selfishness of Francis. She herself asserts her claims on Henry in a passage of rare eloquence in this play, in the scene in which Wolsey

and Campeggio try to persuade her to submit to the King's will.

Have I lived thus long—let me speak myself,
Since virtue finds no friends—a wife, a true one?
A woman, I dare say without vain-glory,
Never yet branded with suspicion?
Have I with all my full affections
Still met the king? Loved him next heaven? obey'd him?
Been, out of fondness, superstitious to him?
Almost forgot my prayers to content him?
And am I thus rewarded? 'tis not well, lords.
Bring me a constant woman to her husband,
One that ne'er dream'd a joy beyond his pleasure;
And to that woman, when she has done most,
Yet will I add an honour, a great patience.

The entanglement of their destinies produced between the Queen and the Cardinal an unnatural, yet inevitable, hostility. The divorce was far from being Wolsey's wish; it was very much to his interest to keep on good terms with the Emperor, who was deeply offended by Henry's desire to divorce his aunt. But being compelled to work in accordance with the King's will, he drew upon himself the hatred of the Queen as well as the resentment of Charles the Fifth. In the trial-scene in this play she expresses her conviction that it is Wolsey who has moved the King against her.

I do believe,
Induced by potent circumstances, that
You are mine enemy, and make my challenge
You shall not be my judge: for it is
you
Have blown this coal betwixt my lord
and me;
Which God's dew quench! Therefore
I say again,

I utterly abhor, yea, from my soul
 Refuse you for my judge; whom, yet
 once more,
 I hold my most malicious foe, and think
 not
 At all a friend to truth.

Katharine is here unjust to Wolsey, as indeed she is throughout the play; but her dislike for him was only natural. There was probably no one who did not believe that Wolsey desired the divorce; even the King himself perceived it but slowly. In his character of scape-goat he had to bear the responsibility of her misery, just as he had to bear that of the King's misdeeds. And therefore it is that the tragedy of his fate is not only greater than Katharine's, inasmuch as his was a greater personality, but also more terrible, because to him even pity was denied, as to one whose punishment all deemed well-deserved. Of course on strictly moral grounds he was very much to blame. Recognising, as he must have done, the iniquity of Henry's determination to obtain a divorce, he ought to have refused at all costs to assist him. But such a course would have involved his immediate ruin, if not death, and to adopt it required a far more ideal character than Wolsey's. That which Cranmer's conscience did not shrink from, Wolsey could hardly be expected to refuse. Certainly his refusal would have had little effect. His obstinacy was one of the most pronounced traits in Henry's character. As Wolsey himself said: "He is sure a prince of a royal courage, and hath a princely heart; and rather than he will either miss or want any part of his will or appetite, he will put the loss of one half of his realm in danger. For I assure you I have often knelt before him in his privy chamber on my knees the space of an hour or two, to persuade him from his will and appetite; but

I could never bring to pass to dissuade him therefrom."

There is nothing admirable in such a character; it is hard to see the attraction in a mixture of passion and obstinacy, unredeemed by generous impulses. And yet Froude made this King the object of an admiration which he tries vainly to make appear judicial and considered. The prejudices of a historian are always interesting, for it is they which give life to his history. But one wants to know the reason of such a bias; and, with respect, it is hard to resist the suspicion that Froude, in his reaction against Catholicism and authority, fell in love with the English Reformation, seeing nothing but good not only in the Reformation itself but in all those who helped to bring it about. This would account both for his very idealised portraits of Henry the Eighth and Thomas Cromwell, and also for his unconcealed aversion to Katharine and the Church and to all who espoused their cause.

Landor showed a far truer appreciation of Henry's character in one of his *IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS* in which he describes an interview between the King and Anne Boleyn on the eve of her execution. The combination of brutal cruelty, sensuality, and a sort of pedantic dread of heresy, which he ascribes to Henry, is exactly characteristic of the man; while Anne displays a piety, rather ingenious than convincing, which well befits the favourite of Cranmer and the woman who could allow herself to be treated with royal state in the King's palace, while her own mistress was still living there with the name of Queen.

Shakespeare perhaps permitted himself to hint, with most delicate irony, at his true opinion of Anne in the scene at the close of which she is created Marchioness of Pembroke.

She really protests too much. Her indignation at Katharine's misfortunes knows no bounds: she "would not be a Queen for all the world"; and yet a few moments later she accepts the title of Marchioness, given to her solely out of the King's "good opinion" of her. Soon, indeed, like the Old Lady in this scene, she does not hesitate to risk her honour in order to secure the royal dignity which she had so spurned. But the heartless cruelty with which she was afterwards treated, guilty though she may have been, more than atoned for the faults she committed in "compassing the crown."

But the only two living figures in the play are Wolsey and Katharine. Their fates supply the tragic element on which the play depends for its interest. True that this tragedy is obscured by much that is of merely historical not dramatic interest, but, as in the events in which they played the chief parts, so in their dramatic presentment they stand out as two of the most striking, most tragic figures in our history. For Wolsey was the last of the great ecclesiastical statesmen of England, and not among the least of them. He ruled England for years under enormous disadvantages, saving her from disastrous wars with

France and raising her to a high place among the nations of Europe. Moreover, seeing the urgent need of reforms in the Church and that a revolution threatened which he was powerless to check, he prepared the way for the coming change; and it is to him, to a large extent, that we owe the moderation, the respect for history and antiquity which characterised the Reformation when it came.

As for Katharine we know more of the pathos of her death than of the dignity of her life; but she is well described by Henry himself in this play.

That man i' the world who shall report
he has
A better wife, let him in nought be
trusted,
For speaking false in that: thou art,
alone,
If thy rare qualities, sweet gentleness,
Thy meekness saint-like, wife-like
government,
Obeying in commanding, and thy parts
Sovereign and pious else, could speak
thee out,
The queen of earthly queens: she's
noble born;
And, like her true nobility, she has
Carried herself towards me.

That he could speak of her in such terms makes his conduct towards her the more unpardonable.

J. L. ETTY.

THE CENSUS-SCHEDULE.

It is called the Occupier's Schedule in England and Wales, the Householder's Schedule in Scotland, and the Family Return-Form in Ireland. It was introduced for the first time at the fifth British Census in much the same shape as it appears in 1901; but it has been altered here and there since 1851. The Schedule has been also expanded from time to time, especially in the compartment headed *Profession or Occupation*. One-third, indeed, of the space in the Schedule to be filled up by the occupier or householder is now devoted to details regarding occupation; and one-fourth of the whole Schedule is filled with precise instructions as to the stating of employment. The particular branch of the trade, or industry, and the material worked or dealt in, have to be specified, also, whether the man is an employer (other than of domestic servants) a worker for an employer, working on his own account, or carrying on a trade or industry at home. To the non-statistical mind this precision may appear somewhat too elaborate and detailed; but it should be borne in mind that the key to the condition of a country lies in its lists of occupations.

The final, and most difficult, work of tabulating the information in the Schedules,—the careful and intelligent classification of occupations, with the numbers and ages of those engaged in them—gives results of the greatest value. Statistics generally can show only quantity; but such figures reveal something of a country's quality. They picture the condition of our country so clearly indeed that, on

comparison with the figures of previous decades, we can see at a glance our industrial development. Electricity, for example, to-day employs thousands, whereas twenty years ago it gave occupation only to hundreds. Thus, very effectively, do the Census Reports make known what we all live by, distinguishing those who obtain their support from the land from those engaged in trade; and, in detail, showing the number supported, at the time of Census, by any particular profession, trade, or industry.

In the earliest Censuses,—1801, 1811, and 1821—there was a rough division of the people under the three headings of *Agriculture, Trade, and Others*. It was in 1831 that the first attempt was made towards a more detailed tabulation. In 1841 all the principal occupations were recorded; and in 1851 was originated the method of tabulation now in use.

Introduced at the same time as the Schedule to be filled up by the occupier, the system used at the central Census-office groups all occupations into seventeen great classes, with numerous sub-classes; in all, about four hundred occupations; and the persons employed are subdivided by sex and quinquennial age-periods. (1) Imperial and Local Government, (2) Defence of the Country, (3) Religion, Law, and Medicine, (4) Art and Literature, (5) Science and Education, (6) Agriculture and Minerals, form the main leading divisions into which are classed the particulars as to profession or occupation.

In classifying their occupations women occasionally give some trouble;

and as showing the decrease in the employment of young children, it may be mentioned that in England the dependent women and children increased considerably in the three decades preceding 1881, in the latter decade by as much as eighteen per cent., and the most of this increase lies with the children. In the same periods the whole population increased by twelve, thirteen, and upwards of fourteen per cent. But it is to be noted that there was a considerable increase in the proportion of children in the population during these thirty years; and changes in the proportions of age and sex are of fundamental importance in regulating the strength, development, and character of a nation.

"A Census in which only the numbers of a people are taken is necessarily incomplete. For in time man differs almost as much from himself as he does from the things around him; and the changes which he undergoes are not wrought solely by external circumstances, but arise in the ordinary course of his life. How different is he in infancy, in the prime of manhood, and in decrepit age." So runs a passage in the Census Report of 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, when exceptional interest was shown in the returns. The Census of 1901 is being taken in the year of another exhibition, the International Exhibition of Industries, &c., to be opened in May at Glasgow, in point of population the second city of the Empire. The difference in value to society between a mature man and a child just entered upon existence being so obviously great and incalculable, it is accordingly very necessary to have ages stated. Therefore the fifth column in the Occupier's Schedule asks boldly for your age last birthday.

Statistics as to age were first at-

tempted formally in 1821; but the answering of the question was then optional, and the attempt was so unsuccessful that, except for the ancient, and almost Biblical, division of males into those under and those over twenty years, no notice was taken of age in the following Census of 1831. The Census of 1841 was much more stringent; it provided that the numbering should be simultaneous, in one day, and required the occupation, birthplace, and the exact age.

It is in the matter of age that a slight element of fiction appears now and then in the Schedules, for a careful study of the reports reveals that there are more of the fair sex aged about twenty-five than can be accounted for. Women of twenty-five in 1891 must have been fifteen in 1881; but the women entered in the returns as twenty-five exceed the young girls of fifteen, of whom they should be only the diminished survivors! It may be offered as an explanation that twenty-five is looked upon as the golden age for matrimony, to be older than which means the facing at once the possibility of remaining an old maid; and, in spite of the opening of many occupations to the fair (the law, in Scotland, is about, for instance, to be thrown open to them), marriage is still looked upon as the most desirable career for woman. Competition is keen, for the proportion of women to men in England is, roughly, one thousand and sixty to one thousand, and in Scotland (whence male migration is greater), one thousand and seventy-five to one thousand.

Any person who refuses to give information, or who wilfully gives false information as to any of the particulars in the Census-Schedule, is liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds. After all the Schedules for

Scotland had been centralised in 1891, a lady sent the sum of five pounds, with half-a-crown for acknowledgment in *THE SCOTSMAN*, mentioning that she had entered her age wrongly. This instance is unique. Payments for income-tax in this way are not uncommon; but prolonged research has not discovered in the United Kingdom a single other case of voluntary payment of conscience-money for a false return in the Census.

More delicate even than the question of age is the last in the Schedule, which deals with the subject of infirmities. This question, which, it is understood, is not meant to include the natural infirmities of old age, requires to know the precise nature of the affliction, and also whether it has existed from childhood. (1) Deaf and Dumb, (2) Blind, (3) Lunatic, (4) Imbecile, Feeble-minded, are the words prescribed. The last word, *feeble-minded*, does not appear in the Scottish or Irish form of the Schedule. Some persons may, indeed, consider that to suggest recording mental feebleness is carrying the Census a trifle too far. On the other hand, ardent sociologists would like the Census to be used as a sort of Record of Family-Faculties or Album of Life-History, with statements as to height and weight, colour of hair and eyes, possessions, and principles, and confessions as to religion.

To widen the Census in that way would weaken it; but at every British Census ecclesiastics agitate for the collection of statistics regarding religion. The Irish Census Act, indeed, includes a provision for taking account of religions, with a proviso, however, that "no person shall be subject to any such penalty for refusing to state his religious profession." Only about five hundred persons refuse; and it is concluded

therefore that the people in Ireland (a gradually decreasing population) do not regard the question as inquisitorial. The inquiry, which has been made successfully at the four previous Censuses, is intended mainly to ascertain the proportions of Protestants to Catholics; and the former are requested to name their "Particular Church, Denomination, or Body." Basing their proposal upon the success of the religious Census in Ireland, and ignoring the different conditions of the countries, enthusiastic statisticians (as well as ecclesiastics) have again and again urged upon the Government the adoption of a similar question in the Schedule for Great Britain. In 1880 the subject was warmly debated in Parliament; but the religious question was not adopted.

It may be mentioned that in 1851 an attempt was made towards a Census of religions in England and Scotland. In that year the church-accommodation was enumerated, and returns were made of those attending the different churches on Census Sunday, March 30th. Admittedly imperfect, such figures were not worth much, and a reliable religious Census is probably impossible.

As the contents of the Schedules are used only for making general abstracts under the headings of occupations, ages, &c., no use whatever is made of the first column, for name and surname. Nor do the details, in Wales and Monmouth, Scotland and Ireland, as to those who speak Welsh, Gaelic, and Erse appear very valuable or necessary. Welsh is on the wane: Gaelic is going fast; and the attempt to introduce Irish as a Parliamentary language has not yet succeeded.

But the particulars as to houses are of the greatest practical use. That matter is tackled most tho-

roughly in the Scottish Schedule, wherein the enumerator has to enter precisely on each Schedule the number of rooms with one or more windows. If the persons described in an English Schedule occupy less than five, the number of rooms occupied by them has to be entered by the head of the family. The Irish Act requires an account to be taken "of the number of inhabited houses, and of uninhabited houses, and of houses then building." Each country, it will be observed, deals with the profound problem of housing in its own way; and this point well illustrates the differences in detail of their respective Censuses. The decade ending in 1901 is several days short; for, owing to Easter Sunday falling upon April 7th, it is necessary to take the Census earlier, in order to avoid the holiday-movement of the population. Otherwise it would have been desirable to conform to the dates of previous Censuses, which would have resulted in the approaching one being taken upon Easter Sunday, when so many people will be away from home.

Our Navy is enumerated specially by the Admiralty. To take a Census of all who go down to the sea in ships seems impossible; but the subtlety of the Census mind is equal to the emergency, and by means of the officers of the Customs and of the Coastguard it is easily accomplished. Persons on board vessels in ports are enumerated by the Customs officials, aided, on occasion, by the respective foreign consuls. Coasting and foreign vessels arriving early in April are to be enumerated. British vessels reaching port up to June 30th are included, in order to take in the long-sea ships from China, India, and Australasia. A special Schedule is prepared, on which are provided spaces for showing the

place at which the Schedule is delivered to the master, the position of the vessel at midnight on Census Sunday (March 31st), and the number of persons, crew or passengers, who were on shore on the Census night. Our ships have carried away from these shores the seeds of many nations. Maritime greatness has moulded our destiny; and each survey, each decennial and Imperial Census, shows the unrivalled spread of our race. True as the words were when Daniel Webster spoke them close upon seventy years ago, how much more true are they now, that her "morning drum-beat, following the sun and keeping company with the hours, circles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England."

Double Schedules are supplied for large households and hotels. For public institutions and barracks or camps, special enumeration-books are issued to be filled up by the head of the institution or the chief resident officer; and in barracks the paid enumerator is generally the barrack-master or quarter-master.

Five different forms are printed specially for the enumeration of similar places in Ireland, with headings *Barrack, Workhouse, Hospital, Prison, or College and Boarding-School Return*. The distressful country also devotes four forms to recording the number of students or pupils "on the books of each College or Boarding-School on any day or days of the fortnight ending the 11th May, 1901;" and other similar information, which the heads of educational establishments in Ireland are required to give during the progress of the Census.

Education is not now included in the English and Scottish Census; but the Irish Family Schedule asks the enumerator to ascertain whether each

person can read and write, read only, or cannot read. The Royal Irish Constabulary chiefly act as enumerators, directed as to their duties and the multiplicity of forms by fully fifteen pages of *Instructions to Enumerators*.

A Census of the whole British Empire, to be published in one volume on the lines of the General Report of the Irish Census, was suggested by the Imperial Federation League, for the reason chiefly that Governmental relations between the United Kingdom and its Dependencies would be better determined by a uniform Imperial Census. But uniformity (save as to numbering, sex, and age,) is impossible apparently for so wide and diverse a population, the varied climates and productions of which render a uniform classification of occupations, for example, an obvious absurdity. Such a Census, however desirable, is accordingly impracticable at present; and the Colonies are continuing this year, for the most part, to collect facts by their Censuses, and to classify them, in their own methods,—the methods they believe to be most suitable to their country and its stage of civilisation. Total population, sex, age (in different periods), and conjugal condition are points included in every Colonial Census-report; while a few

Colonies attempt to ascertain an astounding number of facts as to possessions in the way of land, house-property, sheep, and cattle. Those places which follow most closely the British Schedule seem to be the most successful in securing accurate returns.

The Imperial Census of India is in magnitude and complexity difficult to over-estimate. To enumerate its population of about three hundred millions is a Himalayan task—the very Mount Everest of Censuses. Eighty or ninety millions of Schedules in seventeen different characters (not counting dialects), and a million and a quarter enumerators constitute the machinery for this mighty task.

In 1871 the population, in all parts of the world, of the British Empire was two hundred and thirty-five millions, occupying nearly eight million square miles. Estimates are always subject to correction by Censuses, but it seems reasonable to accept four hundred millions occupying (so much has our territory extended in the last thirty years!) over eleven and a half million square miles, as a fair approximation to the correct figures for 1901 of that great Empire of which, as Lord Rosebery has well said, "We are the tenants in fee, and of which we inherit the responsibility and the glory."

GEORGE BIZET.

SCARNING HOUSE.

A SOLITARY traveller, after a summer day's walking, came to a heathy upland, where huge and broken clouds, reflecting hues of copper from the setting sun, hove above a dusky barrier of forest. In front the bleak road ran over the shoulder of the hill; to the left a tributary road led alluringly into the wooded valley. The traveller had no purpose in hand, save to gratify the impulse of the moment, and he took the side road. Dr. Jacomb had completed his time as house-surgeon, and a lonely walking-tour was his notion of a holiday. Of a sturdy build, with a bold projection of nose and chin, his ruddy, clean-shaven countenance looked at you with a shy solemnity. You would judge him, at the first glance, to be a trustworthy doctor, as he was. But, regarding him in profile, you would remark a certain faint suggestion of the sheep; and a further knowledge of the young man would confirm the impression of a sentimental strain in him. You would discover that he was addicted to the making of verse, innocuously maudlin, a habit which he would avow with a kind of humorous self-pity.

The road ran through a wood of pines, in whose solemn deeps the sun, like an angry star, flitted from bole to bole, transpiercing the gloom with red lances; then turning a corner, the way led over a bridge, whose single arch spanned a little, brawling river. Children were fishing from the parapet; a street of white thatched cottages crouched at the feet of the woods; a tall sign in front of a low-browed inn proclaimed the Scarning

Arms, from whose thick chimney a spiral of smoke rose into the still twilight. It was, perhaps, due to his jaded condition, that the doctor had the curious sensation, familiar to many persons, of having beheld the same scene before, at some unremembered time. The impression deepened as he entered the inn-parlour. The diamond-paned casement that opened upon the talking water, the pots of musk upon the sill, the shining mahogany furniture, the brass candlesticks upon the high mantelpiece, he dimly recognised them all. Jacomb was scarce conscious of the remembrance ere it had passed. The appearance of this remote village pleased him like a picture, and he had a mind to stay there for awhile. As he fell asleep, lapped in down, he heard the owls calling one to another out of the woods, like lost souls.

Wreaths of mist, like carded wool, still clung about the valley when the doctor awoke next morning; but above the mounded forest a flight of birds wheeled and scattered upon a sky of clear gold, and the voice of the river rose like a song in the stillness. Jacomb stole from the house, and along the sleeping street, following the river until he came to a walled enclosure, where a pair of great iron gates stood open between piers of lichen brick. The scrolled ironwork was crumbling away, and the stone balls a-top of the piers were hooded with moss. None was abroad so early; and the doctor ventured up the trim drive, winding between hedges of clipt yew that led him to a paved fore court, the entrance quadrangle of an old red

house. A collie, sleeping on the stones, rose at his footfall, and, after doubtfully surveying the intruder, sidled towards him with an air of propitiation. There was a latent fear in the creature's eyes, a fear (the doctor thought) that dwelt there. Jacomb stood with the creature pressing against his leg, looking curiously about him. He remarked that, while the entrance-front of the place, with its projecting porch (carved in armorial bearings) and stone-mullioned windows, was in good condition, the left wing was falling into ruin. Ivy drooped across the windows and smothered the chimneys; the battlements were broken; the gutters sagged, and the cracked brickwork was all blotched and weather-stained. Beyond, the serried ranks of a pine-wood marched upon the neglected garden.

The doctor went back to the Scarning Arms with the picture of the old mansion, lying so still in the deep morning shadow, vivid in his mind. He learned from the inn-keeper that Scarning House was seldom inhabited, save by its housekeeper. Miss Pierrepont, who, it appeared, was the last and only representative of the Pierreponts of Scarning, came sometimes to stay there. The doctor began to discover an interest in Scarning House. He presented his card to the housekeeper, a dim creature in a red shawl, who took him from the galleried hall through room after room, oak-panelled, set with time-worn furniture, and hung with solemn family portraits. The doctor carried away a confused impression that all the Pierreponts were alike. Sir Anthony in darkling armour, Sir John in silk and lace, Lady Elizabeth (painted by Lely in languid negligence), Sir John and Sir Anthony, in long waistcoats and perukes, and their high-waisted daughters, and the later lords of the manor out shooting in a dreary land-

scape, attired in frock-coat and tall hat,—a certain indefinable suggestion of aspect was common to them all. Here, it would be altered or obscured for a generation; and there, in the next, it would leap to the eye.

Jacomb remarked that he had not seen the eastern wing.

"'Tis all covered in dirt and dust," said the woman; "but you can walk through if you wish." She led him to a little room opening from the hall, from which a second door opened into the disused wing. The room was hung with stamped leather, gilt and glimmering; there were cushions on the broad window-seat; a thick carpet covered the floor; a book-case, fitted with new-looking books, stood in a recess; and two deep arm-chairs were drawn to the tiled fireplace.

"Miss Pierrepont, she uses this room a good deal when she's at home," said the housekeeper. She opened the door which led into a bare, echoing chamber, and left the doctor to explore alone. The dog, which had followed them through the house, started back as the door opened, and slunk away.

The rooms opened one into the other. Cobwebs, clotted with dust, festooned the shadowy corners; the plaster had fallen in patches from the ceilings; the knots stood in knuckles from the worn flooring; the windows were broken. The air was heavy with the odour of a deserted house; a compound of dust and must and mildew, and some indescribable savour of the dead inhabitants, who had slept there for so many years, and died at last. Presently the doctor, passing through a doorway, felt as though he had walked into a dream. A green light, filtering through the leaves that pressed upon the pane, showed no wall facing him, but a sandy bank of earth with projecting gnarled roots. Never in his life had the doctor that impression stronger upon him, of having

seen the place before, than at that moment. He knew that a stairway opened downwards on the left side of the room, against the wall; and there it was. He peered down the broken steps, into a dusky, earth-floored chamber. The chill of the place made him shiver; if he had been there before, it was in a dream, a dream which had frightened him. He remembered the fright, but not the dream.

Jacomb walked smartly back through the sounding chambers, conscious of a certain icy pang in his blood, and of a disagreeable fancy that he was being followed by a noiseless something, that dodged him when he turned to look. Out in the sunshine, he reflected that this kind of thing came from overwork. He had a passing notion that the old house, basking in the sunshine, its battlements and twisted chimneys salient upon the hard blue sky, as though cut in cardboard, was looking at him, from half-closed eyes, with the inscrutable Pierrepont expression. The collie crept up to him and licked his hand.

Jacomb was a dabbler in water-colours; and the next day found him loitering in the galleries of Scarning House, satchel in hand. He had the blind audacity of the amateur; and he contemplated the picture of a Lady Pierrepont in ringlets and point-lace, with intent to transfer that elaborate work of art to his own little block. The half-closed eyes returned his gaze sidelong; the vivid lips were parted; the hand (the artist had taken a pride to display that fine and soft member) lay in conscious unconsciousness upon the silken knee, completing the inuendo of the whole effect. The doctor was at a loss to construe its meaning; but, as he turned his head, he perceived, in the instant divination of a first glance, the problem challeng-

ing him in living face and form. A girl stood regarding him, framed in the bright oblong of the door which opened upon a space of sunshine. The impression came and went; even as she stepped forward, Jacomb lost the transient likeness of the pictured expression.

"I hope," said the young lady, "that you like my pictures."

The doctor, apologising for his presence there, noted that her hair was the colour of wheat-straw, contrasting with the brown eyes and eyebrows. He thought her slight figure too thin for her age, which might have been twenty.

"Not at all," she said, in answer to his apologies; "I returned unexpectedly. Pray do not let me disturb you."

She left him; and Jacomb, after a polite delay, quitted the house. As he crossed the fore-court, Miss Pierrepont, who was walking on the terrace that lay below the windows of the ruined wing, came towards him.

"Do you sketch? I hope, if you find any subjects in the grounds, you will sketch there as much as you like," she said, with a shy friendliness. "Have you seen the outside of the house as well as the inside?"

Miss Pierrepont led him from the terrace (where little flowering plants sprang in the crevices) into the formal garden of fantastic yews, leaden statues of Cupids, and rose-alleys; a patterned setting in which the flowerbeds shone like jewels.

"The place is beautiful," said the solemn young doctor. "But,—don't you find it lonely?"

"It's not what I call a lonely house. Houses are so different, you know. Some have a kind of desolate air, though they are full of people; but here, though the house is empty, it never feels uninhabited. I don't know why,—one has a feeling.

Besides," she added, "I do not live alone; I have a companion. Poor thing, she has just lost her mother, so she has gone home for a few days."

Of those few days the doctor resolved to make the most. How easy to establish himself, sketch-book on knee, in the shade; how natural for Miss Pierrepont to pass that way; how facile the transition from a little casual conversation to tea in her boudoir, adjoining the disused wing, and from tea, to an informal dinner in the hall, the door open to the summer night. And, indeed, so high did the doctor, with a sober delight, perceive that he had risen above the initial footing of the casual traveller, after three or four days.

They were leaning upon the stone balustrade of the terrace. The sun had gone down in a clear radiance behind the wooded hills; shadows crept from the coverts of the garden; the noise of the river flowed through the stillness, as a current through a quiet lake.

"I love this hour," said Miss Pierrepont. "It is worth all the long day to come to it at last,—to 'fear no more the heat o' the sun.'"

Jacomb, who was no great reader, admired the originality of the sentiment. "I suppose," he said, "you often walk here in the evening?"

"Not when it grows dusk. I am afraid of the dark, in the country. It is so large and mysterious and solitary; you can hear every little noise, and you can see nothing."

"What should you see? Is the place haunted?"

"Yes,—by feelings," said the girl, unexpectedly. "Sometimes, when you are alone, feelings come to you, quite suddenly."

"What sort of feelings?" The doctor's eye had something of a professional scrutiny.

"Oh, I don't know; I am talking nonsense. Let us go in. But Miss Bonsor,—my companion, you know—hasn't any feelings," Miss Pierrepont added, as they entered the house. "That is why she is so good for me."

"When is Miss Bonsor coming back?"

"Soon, in a day or two. I am enjoying my holiday while it lasts."

The doctor thrilled at the words, and then relapsed into doubt. It must be that she liked him; and yet, would she have said as much, did she mean more?

They had finished dinner, and were sitting at the red-shaded table, when a moth flew into the lamp, and dropped upon the white cloth, singed and fluttering. Miss Pierrepont drew a pin from her dress, and transfixed the struggling insect.

"Don't do that,—it's cruel," said Jacomb, abruptly. He picked up the moth, killing it, and tossed it out of doors.

"It doesn't hurt them," said the girl, like a sulky child.

"Wouldn't it hurt you, do you think, to be thrust through with a spear?"

"Insects are different," said she, flushing.

"The difference in nervous sensation is one of degree, not of kind," returned the doctor sententiously.

"I don't know what you mean," said Miss Pierrepont. Her scarlet lips pouted, there was a spark of anger in her troubled eyes. Jacomb felt acutely uncomfortable, but he would not speak. Miss Pierrepont looked up at him, sidelong, and an extraordinary likeness to her pictured ancestors peered from her changed countenance. She rose and went to the window, and the doctor, with a conventional word or two, took his leave. Vaguely disquieted, he told himself it was but the trick of a

careless schoolgirl, yet the disquiet remained.

That night he dreamed that he was standing in her boudoir, staring at the locked door which led into the disused wing, terror in his heart. He was being hunted, it seemed, for his life, by whom, or what, he knew not. The girl's voice cried to him from within. He broke through the door, which fell about him in flakes like tinder. The rooms were lower and darker (he vaguely felt) than he remembered them, and crammed to the ceiling with lumber, old furniture, musty straw, and packing-cases, through which he must force his way, the pursuers hot upon his heels. With incredible wrestlings he came into the room where was the earth-bank. Lilian Pierrepoint stood there; he cried her name and thrilled at his daring; he would have had her in his arms, but that the feet and mutterings of those who hunted them were hurrying up the broken stair. The dreamer awoke to an exquisite relief.

Morning brought a new mind, the gift of the new day; and the doctor, strolling contentedly through the village, beheld Miss Pierrepoint walking in front of him, her scarlet parasol a spot of fire in the sunny prospect. She stooped to a little boy who was playing in the dust, and the child ran screaming to his mother, who stood in her doorway. Beyond a touch of vague disappointment (Jacomb expected this lady to be naturally beloved of all children) the trifling incident made no impression on the doctor; but afterwards it returned to him with the significance of a red signal, opening aloft in the dark and passed unregarded.

That day they read in the pine-woods together. Jacomb found himself stumbling among the crags of Robert Browning's country. He

understood scarce anything of what he recited with a careful elocution, but, so long as the lady was pleased, he would have gone on for ever. Presently he became curiously aware that his hearer's mind was, as it were, watching his mind. He began to feel that he ought to understand this poetry; he made an effort, and then he was conscious that she was intent to perceive if he attached a personal signification to the words.

"Ere thus much of yourself I learn—
who went
Back to the house, that day, and
brought my mind
To bear upon your action: uncombined
Motive from motive, till the dross, de-
prived
Of every purer particle, survived
At last in native simple hideousness,
Utter contemptibility. . . .

I don't know what this means," said the doctor uncomfortably. "Let's find something more cheerful." He tried another volume.

"If at night, when doors are shut,
And the wood-worm picks,
And the death-watch ticks,
And the bar has a flag of smut,
And a cat's in the water-but—

A water-but is the last place a cat—"

"Please go on." Miss Pierrepoint was listening intently.

"And the socket floats and flares,
And the house-beams groan,
And a foot unknown
Is surmised on the garret-stairs,
And the locks slip unawares—"

"It's wonderful!" said the girl. "Do you know, I have *felt* that. I wonder if there is anything in it—really?"

"In the water-but?"

"You know what I mean."

"Nerves," said the doctor, "all nerves."

"No, but," said Miss Pierrepont, "it's not all fancy. Sometimes, in a certain atmosphere, one has a sort of impulse from outside. Now, last night, for instance—" She turned a face of such lively distress to the doctor, that he was startled.

"Yes; last night? To what do you refer?" he said composedly.

"When I,—you remember—when I—did that to the poor little moth. That was nothing, *nothing*, but an impulse—how shall I describe it? I was very unhappy afterwards."

"I think you are making much of very little," said the doctor bluntly. "Do you often have this,—this feeling?"

"Yes,—no,—I do not know," she replied uncertainly, after a pause.

"I would forget all about it, if I were you," said the doctor.

His solid cheerfulness had its way with her. "It's nothing," she said. "There! It's gone. Only I do think life is so,—so cruel, sometimes," she added, presently.

"Oh," said the doctor. "Is it? I suppose it is. I hadn't thought of it in that light. In what way do you mean?"

"The things that should make people happy, seem to turn to knives in their hands. Look at the children in the London streets, look at their wretched fathers and mothers. They must have married for love and happiness. See what they come to."

"See what they started from," said Jacomb. "What else can you expect? That's only one side,—the wrong side."

"Ah, well, it's the one we see," said the girl. "We're shut in a prison. The gaolers come in and out, but there's no escape for the prisoners."

"Who are the gaolers?"

"Men,—always men."

"It's not so bad as that, is it?"

said the doctor,—rather feebly, he thought.

"Some people," pursued Miss Pierrepont, "seem to pass by all the wretchedness in the world without seeing it. They can be happy in spite of it. There must be some sort of inner defence wanting in me. Of course, sometimes I forget; but one needs a strong sensation to make one forget."

"Why worry about what is not your fault?" said Jacomb.

"You are a doctor; you spend your life alleviating pain," said the girl; "you don't understand. My people have lived here for generations; I have heard much of their doings, but I never heard of their making a single person about them happier or better. If ever they did good, it is buried with their bones. The harm they did goes on causing other harm, while I have to look on helpless. That is my inheritance. I am responsible for a debt I can never pay. I might become a nun, and do perpetual penance; but then, I'm not a Catholic. So—I do nothing."

"Well, you have it in your power to make one person happy, at all events. And that's something," Jacomb ventured.

"I shall never marry, if that is what you mean," said Miss Pierrepont composedly. "I have thought over all that. No,—I shall just go on living, and forgetting, and remembering again, until I die."

The doctor saw little meaning in her words; they seemed to him the empty talk of a girl inclined to give way to morbid fancies. "You are very gloomy," he said.

"I tell you," she answered, "I live upon sensation. If I stop to think, I am sad. Who, that ever thinks seriously, is not sad?"

"Oh, lots of people," returned the doctor, with great cheerfulness.

"They must have courage, then. I have none. I am selfish, too. I might give away all I have, and earn my own living, but I don't, you see. I live in idleness and luxury, and I like it."

"Would it cheer you to know that you yourself cannot live without giving pleasure to someone in this weary world?" said Jacomb, venturing a little further.

Miss Pierrepont flushed, and was silent. The doctor was about to go on speaking, but checked himself. He would not disturb their mutual understanding, so pleasant, so poignantly alluring, until he knew his own mind more certainly. They spent the rest of that day, and all the next, together, in a shining content, only marred by the prospect of Miss Bonsor's return on the day following.

The last day of their solitude dawned, sultry but livid clear at the zenith. The hills of wood stood away, distinct and vivid, as if fresh-painted, upon banks of thunder-cloud, towering and still. Now and again thunder muttered in the distance. Miss Pierrepont was restless and uneasy; she was wretchedly afraid of thunder, she said. In the afternoon the brightness died out; the solemn pine-woods held their breath, and a darker curtain drew slowly across the grey pall of the windless sky. They were in the garden when the storm burst overhead with a hissing discharge of rain and echoing detonations. The doctor wrapped his coat about Miss Pierrepont, but they were both wet to the skin when they reached the house. The collie was crouched in a corner of the hall, shivering; pendant streams, like icicles, hung from his jaws as he raised his head and whined.

Jacomb, cursing the storm for robbing him of invaluable minutes, hurried back to his inn to change his clothes. The rain had ceased when

he returned, fevered and impatient, through the twilight redolent of moist earth and wet leaves. As he neared the gates, he heard the howling of a dog; as he entered them the cries ceased. Walking up the sodden drive, he saw a black object crawl beneath the bordering yews. Jacomb pushed through the wet branches, to find his friend the collie stretched there. Its eyes were filmy; a dark stain soaked into the gravel. Jacomb, a lover of dogs, kneeled down and handled it with his doctor's touch, and the poor dying creature tried to lick his hand. . . . Presently the doctor got to his feet, wiping his hands together, and stood looking down upon the animal with a very dark countenance. A light, halting step crunched the gravel; Jacomb put aside a branch and peered from his covert, and his sun-burned face turned wax-colour. Miss Pierrepont stood there, bending slightly forward, her head turning from left to right, like a cat questing for its prey. Her lips and nostrils twitched, her hands opened and shut. She turned away,—and the doctor caught his breath. He was afraid, but his training served his need; he drew the buckle tight upon his courage, and, with a deadly surmise tugging at his heart, marched stoutly into the house. The door into her boudoir was open. Jacomb walked into the room and paused, listening and staring upon the closed door that led into the disused wing. So he stood for two or three minutes, and the sweat broke out upon him in streams. Then a light, halting footstep tapped upon the boards beyond the closed door, and there came a little noise of singing. At that the doctor lost command of himself, and ran from the house.

As he gained the open air, he was aware of wheels approaching. A cab from the station crawled up the drive, stopping as Jacomb went to the

window. In the middle-aged, capable face, with shrewd blue eyes that looked into his, he saw his own expression instantaneously reflected.

"You are Miss Bonsor?"

"There is something the matter?"

Jacomb put his head inside the cab, and told his story with medical brevity. He offered professional help.

"If you will kindly stay within call, that will be best. I do not anticipate any difficulty. The truth is, I ought never to have left her."

Miss Bonsor, short, square, and business-like, briskly entered the house, drawing off her gloves; the cab rolled away, and the doctor was left alone in the thickening twilight. The dog was dead; Jacomb fetched a spade and buried him where he lay, grimly reflecting that it was his own heart he was stamping the mould upon. He was mistaken; that susceptible organ was to beat as lively as ever in course of time; but how was he to know that?

He paced the drive amid showers of rain, till Miss Bonsor came out.

The doctor would not enter the house, so they talked in the porch. It is probable that the lady divined his state of mind.

"She is sleeping quietly," said Miss Bonsor, "and will be all right now. Poor girl, she inherits a fatal predisposition,—one does not like to call it insanity,—a sort of cruel impulse,—a craving for a strong sensation. She comes of an old family, whose records are—what shall I say?—consistently scandalous. I believe you would like me to speak without reserve. The Pierreponts lived very freely, and that sort of thing has its consequences. The sins of the fathers, you know— Yes, we have the best advice, and I assure you we take good care of her."

Jacomb thanked her and went away. His professional knowledge told him that she spoke truth. There was no more to be done, or said. He went to his inn and packed his knapsack. The dawn rose, splendid and serene, upon a solitary traveller plodding on the road to London.

IN THE ADVANCE.

(A DAY WITH THE MOUNTED INFANTRY.)

WE are lying down, dismounted, behind the crest of a ridge. We have been on the move since before dawn, advancing, halting, extending, closing, in obedience to orders which come from we know not where, and whose object we cannot see. An hour ago we rode past the *kopje* which was the scene of our losses in the reconnaissance of two days ago, and the line of our brigade now is far to the north of that, which is so far satisfactory as a proof that the enemy must have been forced to abandon his strong position. Against the skyline in front are visible the heads of the gunners who are working a half-battery, the guns themselves being almost out of sight, being a little way down the farther slope of the ridge. The heads move incessantly, and with that urgent, precise swiftness which gives to artillery in action its place among the more wonderful of the works of man. A fresh breeze is blowing from our right, but the guns are firing so rapidly that the thin, almost invisible vapour of the cordite is replaced nearly as fast as it is blown away. The enemy's artillery is firing at the ridge, seeking our guns, their shells plunging far in our rear and throwing up red clouds of dust. Now and then a flat short crack, like the beginning of a thunderclap, sounds high in the air as a shrapnel-shell bursts. We cannot judge of the effect of the fire of our side, and the enemy's is, so far, without any at all. But presently a patter of bullets shows that the enemy is trying long-range

rifle-fire. Two of the gunners in front of us are hit, and almost at the same moment a wheel of one of our guns is broken by a shell.

And now we get the word to move, and mounting the horses, which have been held in a hollow to our right, we begin a forward movement, made diagonal by continual extension to the right. After advancing about a mile we close in again at the mouth of a wide sloping gully, the far end of which is wrapped in smoke and flame. It is the enemy's abandoned laager. Our advance files start to ride down upon it, but are stopped by an order from somewhere; a ruse is suspected, and we halt while the artillery takes up a new position and recommences fire.

At last the whole brigade sweeps forward. Our battalion is dismounted, and I am in charge of the horses of my section, with orders to advance about half a mile in rear of the line. Beyond the deserted laager (composed of calico tents on frames of sawn timber), the only thing rescued from which is a bundle of dress shirts, some half-burned, we come to a white farmhouse, already flying the red-cross flag. Inside are some wounded, with a Boer doctor (an Irishman) who gives news of some of ours, wounded and captured in a previous fight. The fences, of course, are down, the wires cut, the posts hacked away with axes, and gaunt black pigs are ravaging in the little patch of vegetable-garden. We water

our horses at the tank beyond, in which a dead bullock is lying. Hides, entrails, and other offal scattered about, together with the remains of many fires, show that the enemy has been here in force.

The valley opens out to a broad plain, and we advance slowly in extended order. Far in front are the swarming specks of our fighting-line and supports, advancing under shell-fire only. Presently shells begin to drop in our immediate front, coming nearer and nearer; the Boer gunners have sighted the line of horses. An officer comes galloping from the front, and orders us to take the horses into a deep *nullah*. The stream winds a good deal, but its general direction is that of our advance, and between its steep banks we creep along, splashing through mud and water, for the most part under shelter. The enemy's guns are watchful, and whenever a deep pool or a wide bend causes us to expose ourselves our emerging is the signal for renewed attentions. An hour passes; two horses get bogged and have to be extricated with much hauling and cursing; one flounders into deep water and rolls over with a man on his back. At last the hostile fire slackens, swells again, and then dies away altogether. Our line is halted; I ride forward, find my section, and return to bring up the horses. When we re-form about half a mile further on, the sun is sinking, and the day's work seems done. The horses are given a few mouthfuls of food, and then we remount and ride forward in column of sections. Everything is quiet and peaceful; on we go in parade style, the officers in front calling out to dress by the centre, the low sun shining in our faces. Perhaps the General is coming. We pull ourselves together and sit up.

Suddenly,—whiz-z-z—bang—a shell

drops between the sections. Another and another follow, as in obedience to the hoarse shouts of our officers we shoot out into line and dismount. We are half-way down a gentle slope, and the horses have to be taken some seven hundred yards back up that slope before cover for them (the all-important thing in Mounted Infantry work) can be reached. Again I am in charge of the led horses, but this time with my back to the enemy. As the line of dismounted men behind me begins to sputter with rifle-fire directed at the place from which (presumably) the shells are coming, I begin to run beside my mare. The groups of led horses spread out, and half instinctively we take a zig-zag course. No gunners in their senses will waste time and ammunition upon an invisible sprinkle of men when they have the splendid target offered by bunches of led horses moving up a slope. Accordingly, as we go to the right, the shells go to the right also; as we incline to the left, the shells follow suit. Two pass in rapid succession, like a double knock, just above my head, and take the ground about twenty yards to my front. I seem to feel the wind of their passage. One recognises, as it were, the human element. It is no longer the idly-questing bullet, the brute, unreasoning enmity of the shell. Somewhere over there towards the red sunset sky are Dutchmen (whom I have never seen) with their eyes glinting along the sights of their 15-pounders, or fixed on me—me—through a telescope.

I struggle on up the slope, which grows steeper. The rifle-sling seems to tighten across my chest. Another shell falls a little to my right. Probably a Dutchman is swearing now because that one did not burst; perhaps the next one will. Crash, bang!—another takes the ground two or three yards

behind my mare's heels. She throws up her head, and at the same moment I stumble over a stone; the rein is torn out of my hand, and the mare trots away. With a smell of dust and sulphur and fire in my nostrils, I look round. Where are the others? I can see no one; the air is full of dust and smoke; I seem to be alone in the world,—alone with shrieking demons kicking up dense clouds of dust. Bang!—perhaps the last sound for me in this world—ah, the level ground of the ridge at last, and the mare standing quietly. I catch her, scramble into the saddle, and ride down the safe side, signalling to the Number Threes to close as they appear over the crest. By a miracle, as it seems, not a man or horse has been hit.

As we sit chatting in our saddles one of our pom-poms rattles up to a position on our left, and, while we go forward with the horses, it opens fire. The light is fading, but there is no doubt about the gunners having, with their usual luck and skill, located the enemy; one can tell that by the intensity of the fire. Another pom-pom gets to work further to the left, and the two together give forth a throbbing roar. Halted again, one can see with the glass the flashes as the tiny shells strike and burst in the gathering dusk on the rocky hillside about two thousand yards away; and one can see, too, a movement of black dots there that means the enemy is clearing out, while far to the rear a British field-gun is galloping on the road that leads across the neck of the valley to occupy the position just vacated by the enemy's artillery.

Riding through the gloom of evening to the place selected for our bivouac, the signalling-officer of the brigade was in front of me on the flank of my section. Behind him, and at my side, rode his orderly.

Picking our way slowly over the rocky ground, we passed close to the dry stone wall of the kraal of an abandoned farm-house, topped by a row of dark objects. The orderly leaned over in his saddle with arm outstretched, and recovered himself holding something black and white that was a fowl. He raised it in both hands and lowered his head; there was a despairing squawk as the teeth sank into the bird's throat, a flurry of wings, and then silence. The man's action was exactly that of a bird of prey. As the double files passed on, hand after hand swung out until the whole of the roost was gathered in and its members despatched as silently as might be. Respectable biddies, innocents whose ordered lives were thus rudely upset and ended by necessity, grim handmaid of war, you furnished forth a noble supper for hungry musketeers!

During those unpleasant minutes on the shell-sprinkled slope there was at the back of my mind the conscious desire to grasp the sensations of the moment and record them, as I have now done. And, tired as I was, I did not sleep without going over every remembered detail in my mind. In the space of those minutes at least fifteen shells must have fallen in the area traversed by us; and the apparent miracle of our scatheless passage was, doubtless, owing to the failure of the greater number of them to burst. It scarcely needs to be explained (since every civilian now knows something of the matter) that the timely explosion of a shell, the property which makes it more effective than a solid shot, depends upon the accurate adjustment of that ingenious and delicate instrument, the fuse. It has always been remarked throughout this war that the Boer gunners, with all their skill, and though their smartness and alertness gave evidence of careful

training, seem to be incapable, as a rule, of the proper performance of this important part of the artillery-man's work. Either this is the case, or the most part of their shells are defective in construction. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this, and we ought continually to bear in mind that, though our infantry are taught that the greatest power of artillery lies in its moral effect, our losses must have been much greater if a fair percentage of the enemy's shell had reached us otherwise than as solid shot. I speak here only of their field-artillery.

The foregoing faithful record of my own sensations may serve to illustrate what the moral effect of artillery-fire really means. I make no doubt that it reads a good deal like a confession, and not being a soldier by profession, I will go so far as to admit that my emotions contained the elements of what is popularly known as funk. Upon which it falls to be remarked that it was but two days since I had been under fire for the first time,—the less impressive but, in this war at any rate, incomparably more deadly fire of musketry. I might, if I were not an Englishman, say that I had given my proofs.

We had been more or less under shell-fire all day, but the real point lies in the fact that for the moment we were retiring. It is extraordinary, the moral effect (plague take the phrase!) of this simple physical condition. Mr. Joseph Conrad,—a writer distinguished by a more than common subtlety in handling the

springs of human conduct — says through the mouth of one of his characters, that man is born a coward. I believe that this is so; and that it is the habit of keeping himself in hand that enables man to face danger with resolution. Observe the word *face*, used in this connection without any special intention. One's back once turned to the danger, retirement once begun,—even a tactical retirement which has nothing to do with the result of the combat—and the nervous tension which restrains in us the instincts of the natural man becomes automatically relaxed. In a strategic retirement under fire, and still more in the retreat of a beaten force, this relaxation would of course be much greater, and its effects more serious. The example of officers, the memory of national tradition, the religion of the honour of the army, of the regiment,—all these must needs bear their part if such a retreat is not to become a rout, such a force a helpless mob. And it is at such a time that discipline is most patently justified of her children, for in the last resort it is discipline only that can save them from themselves. The monument erected by the French to the memory of Sir John Moore after the battle of Corunna, though primarily a generous tribute to the resolution and genius of that great soldier, should appeal to us also as a monument to the discipline of the British Army.

ERNEST DAWSON,
Lumsden's Horse.

THE ISLAND OF THE CURRENT.

It was the third time that I had come to the grey village in a cleft of the cliff-bound bay, to see if the dark little island-mass, some two leagues distant, might be approached without undue risk of shipwreck. The men of Aberdaron had said, "No, indeed," when asked some years ago if they would run out to sea to suit my convenience. They mentioned the wind, and they were eloquent in quaint English about the current: it was impossible; and truly, when I had struggled with the south-west breeze on the sandy shore and watched the impetuous rush of the crested waves, I also was not so eager about the enterprise. The rain was fierce and thick on the second occasion. It dribbled upon me in the night I passed in the small leaky bandbox of a bedroom, hoping for better things in the morning; and it wailed at the window-chinks and up and down in the pent passages of the uneven old house in menacing fashion. The morning that followed was worse still, so that the men of Aberdaron declined to vex their tongues with more English in further excuse of their prudence.

But the third time paid for all. Once again I ran through the smiling green headland of the Lleyn, with its inkblots of black cattle, its bold isolated hills (so garish in purple and gold at the sunset-hour), its orchids in the marshes, its honey-suckled hedgerows, and its trim little white cottages with their shields of elder bushes and fuchsias planted to the south-west, and their kitchens uniformly furnished with alluring old oaken dressers heavy with willow-

pattern crockery of the kind extravagant and careless Saxons smashed out of use half a century or more ago. It is an exhilarating tract of country, as it ought to be, with the sea on both sides of it. Carriers' carts of the slow, sociable order keep its villages in touch with such civilisation as it may enjoy in the railway-terminus town of Pwllheli. There are frequent fairs and markets in the various little rural centres, to which you drop by surprising steep descents and from which perforce you have to climb seriously. THE DAILY MAIL has bored into their midst, and the scholars of the land exult in it; but it has made no mark at all on the majority, who find the old undisturbed routine of their life sufficiently absorbing. The Lleyn milkmaids, as sturdy as ever about the ankles, continue to sing to their kine in Welsh; and *Dim Saesneg* still follows the puzzled and by no means regretful look with which half the old women to whom you proffer a question compel you to silence. How should it be otherwise with these broad-beamed housewives of the Lleyn? There are no excursion-trains to coax them to assume a thin garment of cosmopolitanism to keep their Sabbath bonnets in countenance on a week-day. Their lords and masters, as traffickers in black cows and fat little horses, have some need to speak a foreign language; but they themselves are home-birds from their hard heads to their useful feet. Their pastor preaches to them in Welsh, and their pigs and poultry would despise a command in English. Only when the railway traverses the

Lleyn to its very tip will they change their rigid old ways, and one may, without a slight to civilisation, hope that day is yet far distant.

Aberdaron does not seem to have built one new house in the last half decade. Considering its marine charms, that is really curious. It has its same three stumpy small inns. Most carriers' and other carts (the former, as often as not, driven tandem) draw up at the Ship, which may or may not prove it the best of the three. The Gegin Fawr, over the way, has a more individual sign-board, but its broken window-panes are not attractive. It is in the Ship that one finds the brightest kitchen-utensils and the most bizarre collection of those china monstrosities which to the Welsh of the Lleyn are objects of art. In its small parlour a brace of large white cats, with black moustaches and red collars, grimace at the visitor from the top of the tall old clock. There are also dogs and stags in china, and china cups and saucers, presents from the uttermost parts of the peninsula. These, with prints of ships (plain and coloured), make up its decorations. Its chairs would please the Spanish Inquisition, if it still existed; they are of nothing but wood, with dead level seats. As everywhere else in the Lleyn, they do not here use carpets to their floors, but oil-cloth of lavish patterns; the result is cold, yet clean. And the bedrooms are like the cabins of a schooner for size, with the slightest of lathe partitions between. You may touch two of the walls at the same time, and, would you consent to do so, you may also (if you know Welsh) listen intelligently to the conversation of the married couple in the next room while they talk in bed in the argumentative Welsh way for an hour or two after they have blown out the candle, or

had it blown out for them by the draughts.

As the high-water-mark of Aberdaron's splendour, the Ship Inn deserves thus to be limned in detail. There is perhaps nothing else in the place that engrosses one, unless it be the two-aisled church a few paces to the south, with the worn old porch and the significant new and strong wall to its churchyard of blue slate tombstones. They are at last determined here that the spring-tides shall not continue to pare away the graves of their forefathers, and play with skulls as it plays with the pebbles of the beach. This is the sole evident witness of the awakening of Aberdaron to the fact that it is a hamlet with a rose-coloured claim upon the regard of strangers. Anciently, say a thousand years ago, it knew its value. Then good men and timid men drifted and hurried hither from all parts of North Wales to seek a passage to the high little island some two leagues from its strand. They were hale men, and they were broken and dying men, and it seemed to them that they could nowhere better live tranquil days and die to more advantage than in the Island of Saints across the water. After the slaughter of Bangor-is-coed, in Flintshire, Christian Welshmen fled from the horrible Saxon and his red sword to all the extremities of the land; and Bardsey was the most glorious and safest goal of all. It were interesting to know how many of these pilgrims lie in Aberdaron's roomy churchyard. No trace of them remains, however, and scant indications of the antiquity of the church of St. Hywyn. The blithe old lady who curtsied with the key of the church had no English for explanatory purposes; nor would it have mattered if she had, for plain whitewashed walls, a holywater stoup, and a dubious font were all the

church disclosed, except a goody pile of ancient, lettered coffin-plates, which lay in the vestry and waited only for the drying of the whitewash to be rehung. It seemed rather a grim kind of decoration, but Aberdaron has got used to it. The grandchildren of the persons commemorated by the rusted tin plates are thankful that time and the marauding sea have left them even such testimonies to their pedigree.

From Aberdaron we sailed at length for Bardsey on a July morning, at the cool hour of six o'clock, with a strong north wind behind us. The boat's master was asked if, being overcome by circumstances and compelled to pass the night on the island, he would bring us home on the morrow, a Sunday. He said "No," without a smile. "I would not like to do it, indeed. I am a member of the Chapel. No indeed, I will not sail my boat on the Sunday." One of his colleagues became shrill on the subject. It was not at all the thing to do such, or indeed any, work on the Sabbath: he feigned to marvel that the thought could enter the head even of an unregenerate Saxon; but he was consoled when he was told that he would not in any event be tempted to do such a wrong to his conscience. The north wind swept us obliquely across Aberdaron's bay towards the point of Pen y Kil. The ease of the passage seemed enchanting. We accepted with gratitude the auspicious wind, and postponed all thought of the return. But at the headland there was no summer sea. Here we touched the famous current, with its seven-knot stream from west to east or from east to west, according to the tide. And here the strife began, with a rushing and tossing and a whistling of the gusts more than enough to make us understand why it is that often, for

weeks in succession, the little island enjoys no communication with the mainland. Even in such weather as we had, none but an expert may make the two-mile crossing of the current. Again and again the mainsail was loosed to the end of its tether. The waves and swell had an Atlantic quality, and we seemed a poor little craft indeed to be mixed up in such a turmoil. So it was until we once more got under the lee of the land, this time the high north end of Bardsey itself, a steep slope of amber sward with vivid green bracken patches to its summit five hundred feet above us. Here happened years ago one of the few wrecks which Bardsey has in its chronicles. An Italian barque, homeward bound from Liverpool, was caught by the current and in thick fog brought up against the base of the slope. But no lives were lost; the men scrambled ashore and over the ridge to the comfortable stone houses in which the islanders live their secure days. More recently a man from the Bardsey lighthouse slipped and fell from the hill-top while shooting rabbits. He died from the misadventure; and this is about the whole tale of Bardsey's tragedies for half a century or more.

Under a clear blue sky we sailed placidly now into the little creek between black weedy rocks which is Bardsey's adequate make-shift of a harbour. It was a fishy little haven, with baited lobster-pots and ugly carcases on its beach, and gulls pecking at them. The sweet smell of newly-cut hay came to us over these putrid odours. The sunshine on meadows and cornfields, and the smiling southern side of the cliff where it drops in sharp terraces to the grey houses of the islanders, well above sea-level, were good to behold. Here the fierce roar of the current

and wind was lulled. It was like stepping in five minutes from Piccadilly into the heart of Epping Forest. Who would not wish to be king of this little island-territory some six and a half miles round, with its romantic charms of highland and stern coast-rifts for the surge to tear at, and its half-dozen farms as self-supporting as any in the Midlands?

We ascended gradually to the north through oatfields, potato-plots, and perfumed meadows. A couple of sturdy horses threw out their tails at us and ran before the wind. Then a slow old man, with much grizzled hair to his head and his chin, and the signs of recent breakfast about his mouth, came towards us with a scythe. "I am the king," he said quietly, when with a singularly gentle tone he had asked about the passage as if it were an adventure, and commented sententiously upon such news as we could give him. He did not smile, but spoke like one who would fain have added: "I am a poor old man to be a king, but the king I am nevertheless." And then, with a deferential little bow, he went his way to cut grass. The swishing of his scythe soon joined the music of the larks, in full choir above the neck of warm lowland between the water on the east and the water on the west. Starlings in small bevvies rose and fell. Two or three black cattle stood in an enclosed area, three parts dwarf gorse and the rest close-clipped turf. Some white dots on the slope told of sheep. Behind, the white road ran through the fields between snow-white gateposts towards the square white lighthouse with red bands to it which occupies the southern tongue of the island. The north hill and the south cape are the only parts of Bardsey left pretty much to Nature. The blue sea and the blue sky encompass all.

We sought the abbey, which at the general overthrow of English monastic houses seems to have had a revenue of from £46 to £58. By that time it had long served its turn. Its adjacent graveyard has been filled and filled again. The tradition of the ground's sanctity remained, but devout Welshmen did not continue to press across the current for ultimate quarters in it. The disestablishment came as no great shock to anyone outside Bardsey, and perhaps even the islanders soon learned to profit by an independence that was hardly theirs while so stately a person as an abbot lived and moved so unavoidably in their midst. Four or five substantial farmsteads with pointed gables were passed, and one rather humble cottage of the familiar mainland kind. Though dispossessed of its abbey, it was plain that no poverty, as the rest of us know the word, exists in the little island. The men we met were strong-shouldered comely fellows, one or two with the genuine Celtic red to their locks; and the women we saw had the look of the most capable of their hard-working sex. There were approved agricultural implements in the farmyards, flowers in the windows, dwarfed shrubs in plenty about the houses, geese and poultry enjoying the sunshine and insects outside. And round and beneath each farm to the seaboard, south, east, and west, the land was all marked out in trim, fruitful enclosures. Not a yard had run to waste. The green and russet and pale yellow patches, of an acre or two each, pleased the eye in contrast with the rough bulk of the hill which screened them from the north. No islet could make a more prosperous show to the casual stranger on a midsummer day.

And here, where three farmsteads formed a cluster on an elevated slope

of the hill, we found such of the abbey as remains; a mere three-sided block of old walls with window-slits and not one carved stone to it. It was more like a broken keep than the remains of a famous house of prayer. They told us of big iron shot found in the graveyard which surrounds it, and these too were better visitors for a castle than an abbey. But the Frenchmen who fired them (or was it one of Cromwell's frigates?) had ample excuse in the bold face with which the abbey looked at them athwart the edge of the current which, perchance successfully, dared the vessels to come nearer. It is a very plain lump of ruin nowadays, wholly severed from the abbot's house which in Pennant's time was the domicile of several of the natives, and which is now transformed out of all recognition. Bardsey has gone far in these five or six score years. Under the paternal administration of Lord Newborough its lot has become enviable indeed, and in Aberdaron its houses are spoken of as something quite fine in comparison with the cottages of the Lleyn. And fine indeed they are, and low are the rents they pay for them. Imagine it! A villa residence, worth anything from £30 to £40 a year within ten miles of London, and ten or twelve acres of excellent cultivated ground, to say nothing about rights of grazing on the hill and unrestrained fishing in waters renowned for their whiting, lobsters, and crabs, —all for the trifling rent of £10!

The islander who thus expounded his privileges was not blind to them. He envied no man. But the farms are few, and no yearning stranger need apply to be registered as a candidate for the next vacancy. To the late Lord Newborough Bardsey was a precious and loved resting-place in his old age. He occupied rooms in one of his own farmsteads. Though

he died on the mainland, hither a year afterwards they brought him to the churchyard of the saints in November, 1889, and here he lies under a stately, if simple, British cross of stone as high, or nearly, as the abbey ruin itself. The old lord, as the islanders fondly call him, has raised a yet more worthy monument to his memory in the prosperous condition of his tenants. A crofter from the Hebrides, set on shore here without previous enlightenment, would think he was in a colony of lairds.

Two other fair high crosses of stone are to be seen in this holy centre of the Island of Saints, and a few humbler tombstones and mounds. The sceptic who comes here to smile about the twenty thousand saints, supposed to lie under the long grass of the small enclosure, has to reckon at least with the faith of Lord Newborough, who raised the cross to their memory. The sceptic will also be interested to hear what the islanders themselves have to say on the subject. "It is all bones underneath, nothing but bones. I have seen them myself, indeed. There were womans with hair eighteen inches long, and childs, and mans, in such heaps as you could not believe, —no, indeed, except you saw them yourself. And their teeth,—oh, indeed, I never did see such full mouths of them. Not one toothache in any of them!" This evidence was given with no particular enthusiasm about the sanctity of these dead thousands. The islander who gave it, though not the king himself, is in many ways the first man in Bardsey. He had not troubled to read up the history and traditions of his ancestral birth-place; why should he, since Bardsey is scarcely more to the rest of the kingdom than the rest of England and Wales is to Bardsey?

He spoke according to his knowledge, and left us to judge at our ease and pleasure about the sanctity or sinfulness in life of the men, women, and children of this preposterous charnel-pit. Nor did I, for my part, trouble him with the unkind retort of old Fuller, author of the *WORTHIES OF WALES*, when he was confronted with the mellow tale of the island's holiness: "It would be more facile to find graves in Bardsey for so many saints, than saints for so many graves." The word *saint* itself, as applied to men born of women, will need more defining than the average dictionary-maker has space to give to it.

A little above the ruin is the very plain modern chapel wherein Bardsey worships on Sundays. It is rather less than nothing to the antiquary, though some moderately ancient carving has been imported and embedded in its pulpit, and one sere morsel of an abbot's tombstone finds shelter in it from the salt winds without. The pulpit is very large for so small a chapel, as the delicate minister promptly admitted. But there may be design in this, for there is room for an increase in Bardsey's population, and the time may come when the chapel will have to be extended for the island's needs. At present the muster is some sixty-five men, women, and children, all hearty, save perhaps the minister. Even he may well hope to live out his full span in this pure air, with his parsonage sheltered to east and north by the big island-hill.

Rounding the chapel, we came to Bardsey's public fountain. "Cold from the rock," said a dame in her native Welsh in praise of the fluid, as she looked up from her bucket. It is just a hole in the hill-side, heavily draped with maidenhair ferns; a fairer fountain than any

in Rome, though not too bountiful in a dry season. Perhaps this shortness of the water-supply is Bardsey's one weak point. At the lighthouse there are reservoirs for a drought, but the keepers' wives do not talk gratefully of the stagnant pools thus immured for their benefit.

From the spring to Bardsey's pinnacle it is a bracing, brief scramble, and from the roomy ridge the crimsoned site of Our Lady's Chapel and Our Lady's Well across the Channel looks awkward in its abruptness. Carnarvonshire's end seems to mourn its separation from the island. Below, the north wind blew up the crests of the waves in the race as when we were in the strife of it, and the cat's paws danced one after the other over the shining blue water to the eastward. Choughs nest on the hill, and rabbits burrow in it. In the shallow recesses bracken thrives as in an English wood. The summit of the hill, where crags do not outcrop from it, is weathered into tens of hundreds of little grassy heaps which might readily stand for graves. Here, it seemed to us that we had really run to earth the twenty thousand saints of Bardsey. As an illusion it is more than passable; but there is no legend on the subject, and though the island's romantic charm would be heightened by such an aerial cemetery (five hundred feet above the water), the winds and the rains must be judged sole creators of the freak.

The whole of a summer's day might be spent gaily on this sweet cliff-top; but it behoved us to slide down the polished slope to the south and pay our court to the king of the isle and the princesses his sisters. Our guide was willing enough to play the part of lord-chamberlain and sue on our behalf for a sight of the crown; yet he confessed, with a shrug, that,

island-born though he was, he had never itched to see, nor had seen, the tinselled bauble with which a Lord Newborough of three quarters of a century ago had, in sport, for consolation, or perhaps with secret sentiment, crowned the grandsire of the king-regnant.

The king's farm was as neat and snug as any of the others. We were received with pretty bashfulness by the two elderly princesses, rosy as ripe pippins, one of whom pinched her cheeks with a thumb and forefinger to repress her smiles when the object of our visit was declared. They led us into a parlour of hard chairs, with printed rules on the wall for the maintenance of health, first aid in accidents, drowning, &c., indicative as it seemed of the king's beneficent power in the land; and then they sought the crown. It was a thing to smile at, the more courtly of them demurred; but if we insisted—we insisted, charmed by the modesty and deference of the princesses. They left us, and for minutes we waited. Then they returned, the one leading with the crown, borne as if it were an *entrée* to which exception might be made but for which every possible indulgence was entreated, the other following and still dimpling her wind-coloured cheeks with her thumb and forefinger.

"This is it, gentlemen," said our guide, with scarcely veiled derision, as he took it from the princess and set it upon the table.

For so small a realm it was a very respectable crown. A thing of tin and brass, fitly bevelled, with metal rosettes, and onerous to wear. Time and neglect had dulled its first splendour, but it would still look regal enough, in a play or a photograph. The princesses protested, in Welsh, and their subject listened kindly and comforted them. They

were assured by him that we had not come to mock; and indeed he spoke the truth in this, for where there is no inordinate assumption of dignity there is nothing to ridicule. The king's farm is rented like the rest, at about a pound an acre, including his palace. And the king himself, though an old man, cuts his own hay, put out his lobster-pots, and catches whiting by the hour from the rocks in suitable weather. "He has no rights, indeed," said our guide; "he is no better than the others." Then he bade the princesses remove the crown and wrap it up again; and we shook hands with the timid old ladies, thanked them and went our way, sunned by their shy smiles until we were behind their gooseberry-bushes. The king's garden, like the other gardens in Bardsey, is prolific in gooseberries, but his stunted apple-trees, all cobwebbed with caterpillar blight (the continued labour of years), were a mournful sight.

One farm in Bardsey is like another. We did not therefore call on all the island. We did not even visit the fortunate finder, many years ago, of the five and twenty thin gold-pieces, as large as a half-crown, all of which, save one, have been dispersed about the mainland. The treasure-trove came from the wall of a dismantled cottage, and has ever since been a source of anxiety, as well as of rapture, to its discoverer. It proves what placid days they live in the island when I say that our guide, in spite of his wish to humour us in the matter of this one surviving *rial*, or gold noble, or whatever it was, hoped we would not press him to bring us within reach of the coin. He thought the lord of the manor might hear of it and claim his rights. One may give the lord of the manor credit for no such harshness at so late a season.

The lighthouse at the south end was, in our guide's opinion, an object that no visitor ought to neglect. Yet, in fact we did not enter it: the north wind cried loud against it and set the sea fretting into the black channels at the island's extremity; and the lighthouse itself is only one of a crowd of brethren all pretty much of a pattern.

We preferred to wander back through the swaying oats and barley and clover grass to the farm set highest on the hill-slope, and there, in the heat of the day, we rested. The guest-room had the inevitable marine atmosphere. There were engravings of ships on its walls, and rude copies in wool-work of the same engravings hung by their side. There was a stuffed puffin here, shell and seaweed trifles there. The photographs in the album were of seasoned old sailors and their families. The books were simple tales of the sea leavened with a manual about birds' eggs (the pages devoted to guillemots, cormorants, puffins, &c., marked appreciatively by honest thumbs), and a colossal brass-bound Bible. We had a peculiar interest in the

atmosphere, for they were preparing for us a large crayfish, taken from its locker in the creek, alive, and flapping out reports as of a pistol under our very eyes! It was a fish to grace any luncheon-table, some four pounds in weight, worth to Bardsey a shilling or fifteen pence; but I regret to say that it came before us, with tea and bread and butter, piping hot. Never was a noble crayfish so maltreated! And our disappointment was well proportioned to the insult itself. We had the return voyage before us, against the wind, with certain rocketing in the current, and hot crayfish as a stand-by for the ordeal!

It may be a weakness to confess it, but in the cross-water between wind and tide, on the return voyage, that hot crayfish *was* too much for us. I fancy it would have vexed even an admiral. Nor had we the heart to spoil the pleasure of our boat's crew by suggesting that, since we preferred not to smoke, they also might have kept their pipes in their pockets. The Aberdaron tobacco is coarse.

CHARLES EDWARDES.

BOOK-HUNTING.

THERE is a certain series of books which, in a greater or lesser degree, no gentleman's library is without. Some men have them all, some have three or four, some have only one, but rare is it indeed to find a man who has none at all. They would probably have come into Lamb's category of *biblia abiblia*, books that are no books; we say probably, but we cannot speak authoritatively, for they are a later development. The series, to which be all honour, is THE BADMINTON LIBRARY, which deals exhaustively and in a scientific spirit with all manner of sports and pastimes.

It is significant of our national character that these books should exist at all, still more so that they should be practically universal. For they are, after all, only a well-defined type of a very large literature. If we go into the matter we shall find that the demand for such books, at least for such as have any literary or practical merit, is at least as great as the supply. It shows that we are a nation of sportsmen, and not merely a nation in which sportsmen are to be found. If we turn to France or Germany, which seem rather to answer to the latter description, we see that in both countries the literature of sport, at any rate the modern literature, though it exists, is rather an unknown and unappreciated quantity. With us, on the other hand, it has a distinct and very important place of its own. We are all sportsmen according to our lights and opportunities. Some of us spend our lives in the pursuit of big game, others in the extermination of rats; in both cases the principle is the same. It is

the instinctive love of the chase handed down to us from our rude ancestors whose raiment was a coat of blue paint, whose weapons were moderately sharp flints, and whose lives were one long happy hunting. Sometimes they were the hunters, sometimes the hunted, and in both cases no doubt they enjoyed it. They certainly had greater opportunities than we now have. They knew no rights of property, no game-laws and no close season. If they met a bear they were at liberty to kill it, if they could; equally of course it was at liberty to kill them. But now if we meet a rabbit, we have to consider many things before we attack it. In the first place, whose rabbit is it? In the second place, whose land is it on? Have we permission to shoot on that land? And finally, have we a gun-license? If our answers are not satisfactory to our conscience and, more important, to the conscience of other people, then we are defenceless and at the mercy of the rabbit; we may not even offer any resistance if it attacks us.

Times alter, our necessities increase, and with them our powers of invention. Probably, even if it were still open to us to put on a coat of blue paint and to attack a bear with a moderately sharp flint, we should hesitate to do so. We should in all likelihood make use of our enlarged resources and send out an armoured-train and a Gatling gun, since the bear is, all things considered, vermin and harmful to crops. But the point is hardly worth considering. We have no bears, and according to the farmers we have no crops.

Since then we have no bears and may not hunt rabbits, other species of hunting have been invented to fill the obvious gap. In the country the hunting is still after creatures more or less animate, such as rats and butterflies; it will be understood that we are only discussing the hunting that is free and open to all, nor do we desire for an instant to infringe on rights of property, even in words. This, of course, is the natural progress of evolution; the bear has given place to the rat, the wolf to the mouse, and the aurochs to the butterfly, much in the same way as man is descended from the angels,—for let it here be said that we entirely reject the Darwinian theory.

But in great cities we have no animate objects of the chase for, as we observed just now, we are strenuous in defence of the rights of property. Therefore the sportsman of the city must hunt inanimate objects; and very interesting it sometimes is. There are many classes of objects, all desirable and all much hunted. Some men, for instance, when forced by age or circumstances to give up the butterfly-net, by a natural transference of their affections take to hunting blue china. But the hunting to which we would call particular attention is that of books. The branch of country sport to which it is most akin is angling. Angling, of course, is not hunting, for it is the contemplative man's recreation, and booking (if we may for once use a word in its proper sense) is of its nature much wilder and more thrilling. Yet there are many points of resemblance between the two. Old clothes are essential to both; why they are necessary to booking will be made clear later. Both pursuits require a large amount of practice and patience, and success is as rare in the one as in the other. Finally both are ruined by vile and innumerable poachers.

We will deal with the latter first. The novice in booking will naturally turn his attention to street-stalls and to small, dingy and, as he thinks, little frequented shops. There surely he will be able to pick up wonderful bargains for very trifling sums. Let us watch him awhile and learn from his inexperience. Observe his costume. His frock-coat is a miracle of the tailor's art; his silk hat obviously new and cheap at a guinea; well-cut trousers, well-fitting boots, a spotless collar, new gloves, and a gold-headed umbrella give him the appearance of an evidently prosperous man, not one to spare his shillings. He stops at a little bookshop, in the window whereof he has spied a most desirable book. It is a fine tall copy of Plautus from the Aldine Press, not exactly a rare book or a valuable, but a good one to have. It evidently catches his eye, and he steps inside to ask the price. In reply to his polite question the shopman explains all the beauty of it, lays great emphasis on the fact that it is uncut, and finally demands a guinea for it. The novice is much alarmed. Who would have thought that any book could have cost a guinea in such a little shop? Evidently he has fallen into a specialist's hands, and the best thing that he can do is to get out of them again. So he leaves the shop without more ado, and with alarm expressed on every line of his countenance; had the man asked ten or even twelve shillings he would have bought it, but a guinea was altogether too much.

While we have been watching the novice another man has taken up his stand before the window. This is a man of paltry appearance with the face of a ferret, and in costume a striking contrast to the first comer; the principal features of it are an ancient greasy felt hat, a

dilapidated overcoat (once black but now mostly green), an unutterable collar, and very dirty hands. This man also notices the Aldine, and hearing the bookseller price it at a guinea, a knowing smile crosses his face as he turns away. In a few minutes, however, he is back again, and entering the shop proceeds to nose round it like a terrier-dog. Among other books he takes up the Aldine, only to put it carelessly down again. Presently he picks it up a second time with three other volumes and takes them all to the bookseller. "Fifteen for the lot?" he asks. The bookseller demurs; they haggle about it for a minute or two, and finally agree on seventeen and sixpence.

The ferret-faced man pays and departs with his purchase. If we follow him we shall find that he goes straight to another bookshop, a larger and more important one; but he does not go there to buy. He produces the four books which he has just bought and offers them for sale for twenty-five shillings, which he gets. Thus for little more than half an hour's work he secures a profit of seven and sixpence. We may mention incidentally that the second bookseller prices two of the books at ten shillings a-piece and the other two at seven and sixpence a-piece. And so everybody is satisfied,—except the novice.

The reader will wonder why the first bookseller demanded a guinea for the Plautus when he was evidently willing to take a quarter of that amount. The novice was too smartly dressed. There are some booksellers who have no standing-price for their wares, but rate them according to what they think each customer will give. This one judged from the costume of the novice that it was worth while asking a guinea, though he would have taken five shillings. If the novice was fool

enough to give it, so much the better; if not, he would have no difficulty in selling it to someone else for five shillings. He was nearly right, but he extended his price too far.

The ferret-faced man is of course a poacher. Perhaps he would prefer to be called a bookseller's agent, but the result is much the same. Like all poaching it is a precarious means of subsistence; but unlike other poaching it is not punishable by law. The poacher may on a good day turn over several pounds, but on a bad day he may have to realise at a loss. In any case he is an unmitigated curse to the amateur book-hunter, as he is always on the spot, always on the alert, and wonderfully sharp-nosed for a bargain.

Now the reader will understand why old clothes are necessary for the book-hunter. It is necessary to compete with a poacher at his own weapons. Even as when one is trout-fishing, one gets hints from, and copies the flies of, the nearest local expert, so must one in book-hunting copy the outfit of the bookseller's agent. The costume which we recommend would be as follows: a hat of the pattern aforesaid; a very ancient overcoat with large pockets; a flannel shirt; trousers frayed at the hem, and baggy at the knee. With the collar some care and preparation is necessary. It should be of the old-fashioned sort which turns down at the corner; wear it for a week and then keep it out of the clutches of the washerwoman for another week. Put it on without a tie, if you can bring yourself to do so, and you will be complete at all points. Then, having carefully mislaid your gloves, you can set out, and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you look as much like a book-poacher as art can make you; and moreover you will be given credit for some knowledge of books and their value.

That angling is a pursuit which requires a good deal of patience will readily be admitted; but we do not hesitate to say that book-hunting requires every bit as much patience if it is to be taken up in a proper spirit. There are so many things that combine to try the temper. It is a common experience to go into a shop and find lying before you the very book that you have been hunting for years, and then on enquiry to find that it has just been sold. Probably you will never come within speaking distance of it again. The first edition is another fruitful source of annoyance. It is so elusive; one thinks one has it, and lo! one has it not. In some cases, for example, one has to rely entirely on memory to ascertain whether a book is a first edition or a later one, because the book itself does not reveal it. We might cite many instances in which the amateur may easily be deceived. GRAY'S *ELEGY IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD* is one. The first edition was printed in 1751, the second followed in the same year, which in itself might cause mistakes (there is a difference of nearly fifty pounds in their values), and there were many others in the course of a few years. Some of these bear no sign-post to the collector in the shape of an edition-mark, and the enthusiast whose dates are to seek may, therefore, be misled into paying a fancy price for an eighth edition in the hope that it may prove to be a first. It is the nature of man to assume that if a book does not announce on the title-page that it is some other edition, it is therefore a first. Other common traps for the unwary are STERNE'S *SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY* and THOMSON'S *SEASONS*.

The worry of finding that a book is incomplete is also often to be expected. Often most respectable-looking books

have a page missing somewhere. One cannot trust even a folio that has been connected with religious houses all its life. It may be invincibly bound in the strongest calf; it may have passed all its quiet unread days behind glass, and be as clean as on the day on which it was issued, and yet page 341 may have vanished. We once knew a man who had a firm belief in the devil, and for this reason. He said that he could hardly count the imperfect books by which he had been misled in his time, and in nearly every case these books had a highly respectable past. They had grown mellow in monasteries, or had been carefully tended in great libraries, where they were never touched except to be dusted. It seemed morally impossible that harm could have come to these books, and yet each one had a page missing somewhere. Therefore he was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the devil was in it. He supposed that when the devil was in need of some more quotations he abstracted a page from some little-read book, choosing it both in order that he might obtain a reputation for wisdom, and also that he might not be found out. We do not uphold this theory, but we do recommend the book-hunter, so far as possible, to collate every book of any importance which he may contemplate buying.

The book-hunter should not labour under the idea that he will be laying out his money to good advantage, and that if a rainy day comes he will receive his initial outlay tenfold into his bosom. That would indeed be a grievous error. When the rainy day comes he may think himself fortunate if he sells his books for half what he gave for them; for, when all is said, second-hand booksellers have a very considerable knowledge of their own business, and on the

whole they manage to sell their books for quite as much as they are worth.

Voltaire says somewhere that books are made from books. It would be as well for the novice to remember this remark, at the same time reading a new meaning into it, for the truth of it is certain some day to strike him forcibly. Let us imagine a chain of circumstances which will impress it on him. In the first place, he has to catch a train in a quarter of an hour, yet he cannot resist stepping into that small book-shop just on the chance of finding something. He does find something which he has long coveted; a most captivating book in appearance, bearing on its cover the legend COUNTRY CONTENTMENTS, 1611. The title-page reveals the fact that it is also THE HUSBANDMAN'S RECREATION and that it is compiled by one Gervase Markham, whose name is not unknown to the novice because he has a friend who makes a specialty of his books. A little knowledge picked up from this friend has made him aware that first editions of Markham are very rare; therefore, after satisfying himself that the end of the book seems all right, he gladly pays the two guineas asked for it and hurries off to catch his train. In the evening he takes it round to the friend who is learned in Markham and asks his opinion. The friend examines it carefully and finally says, "This book is made up;" and even so it is. He proves to the novice's complete dissatisfaction that it is only the eighth edition of 1649 adorned with the title-page of the first edition.

We have said that second-hand booksellers have a very fair working-knowledge of their trade, and this is perfectly true; but here and there may still be found one or two whose knowledge is less than even the knowledge of the veriest tyro among

collectors. At this we imagine we can see the veriest tyro pricking up his ears and making him ready for a bargain; but let him not be precipitate, for not even among the men who know nothing about books can he hope to turn his own comparative erudition to account. The people who sell books in ignorance of their real value are mostly those who keep old curiosity-shops in country towns. We regret to have to record it, but, from bitter personal experience, we know that it is almost impossible to cheat them in these matters, nay more, that it is well nigh hopeless to attempt to buy a book from them at all, even, we may say, when one is prepared to buy it for a fair price. The following dialogue may perhaps help to explain what we mean.

Confirmed Bibliomaniac.—"May I have a look round among the books?"

Provincial Shopkeeper.—"Certainly, sir. Might you be in want of anything in particular?"

Con. Bib..—"Oh no, thanks. I only thought I would like to look at them."

He does so, and roams about for some minutes among many volumes of theological works of the Paley's Evidences type, a task that would crush any but a maniac really confirmed. At last, at the very bottom of the heap (books are always in heaps in old curiosity-shops) he comes across a book of a different sort; for the sake of our illustration let us say a copy of the 1772 edition, in quarto, of the miscellaneous poems of that pleasant Latin versifier Vincent Bourne. Such a book might possibly fetch as much as ten shillings in the metropolis; in the provinces therefore, it would be reasonable to offer three shillings and sixpence. As it happens, the bibliomaniac does not possess it, and he wants it. He therefore makes a violent effort to

appear unconcerned with the usual result,—that he looks a very demon of covetousness.

"How much do you want for this?" he says, holding it up.

"It is a very old book," remarks its owner.

"Yes," says the maniac; "but how much is it?"

"It is very old indeed. I should say it was quite one of the first books printed; wouldn't you, sir?"

"Well, it is not quite so old as all that."

"I had a gentleman in here the other day looking at it, and he said it was a very old book. Perhaps you know him, sir? Mr. Jones the butcher."

"No, I haven't the pleasure. What did he say about it?"

"He said it was the oldest book he had ever seen, and he wished he could afford to buy it."

"Did he indeed?"

"Yes; he said you never see books like that nowadays."

"That is quite true. What else did he say?"

"He said that in London they would give a lot for a book like that."

"Yes?"

"These old Greek books are very hard to come by now."

"Are they?"

"Yes; you see it is on account of the printing."

"Why?"

"Well, Mr. Jones said there had been no printing done worth speaking of since the days of the Greeks and Romans."

"Mr. Jones said that?"

"Yes, and he said I was very lucky to have such a book."

"To come to the point, how much do you want for it?"

"Well, sir, being such an old book and having been printed in the times of the Greeks, and Mr. Jones having

spoken so highly of it, I couldn't in fairness to myself let it go for less than ten pounds."

Our illustration is fictitious, but we can assure the hopeful beginner that it is in no way exaggerated. We remember once coming across two books in a little shop in a country town, one a bible and the other a prayerbook. What their exact dates were we do not know, as they had both lost their title-pages and were very incomplete in other particulars, but neither of them can have been earlier than 1700. Above each was a large card announcing that they were to be had for the moderate prices of fifteen and ten pounds respectively. This happened not so very long ago, and we imagine they are in that little shop still. Of course it gives an air of prosperity to a shop to be able to charge for its goods exactly two hundred and fifty times what they are worth, but it is not cheering for the collector.

Only once do we remember getting a bargain in a provincial town. We bought a book for fourpence, which even at the time we thought reasonable. When we returned to London we showed it to a bookseller, in whose opinion we confide, and asked him what he thought it was worth. He considered it for a few moments and finally announced that it was worth,—fourpence. This of course was very satisfactory, because, as we have pointed out, if a man buys a book for fourpence he must not expect to be able to sell it again for more than twopence.

It must now be clear to the reader that, whether the bookseller be well-informed or ignorant, whether he live in town or country, by no chance can he be induced to sell his books for less than they are worth. The most the collector can do is to buy a book for a fair price, and tell his friends it

is worth the largest sum that a copy of it has ever fetched in the market, possibly ten times what he gave for it. He need not tell them that the copy which fetched so much was one of three printed on vellum; they will eventually find that out for themselves.

We trust that our description of the difficulties that beset the collector has not given the novice the idea that to form a library is as hopeless a task as to become a poet. On the contrary, we can assure him that nothing is easier or cheaper. There are thousands of books that may be picked up almost for nothing. We would not pick them up ourselves,—now; but that is no reason why he should not. He can specialise if he likes. Supposing that he decides to collect works of fiction, he will have no difficulty in getting together a splendid assortment of estimable works, not paltry modern effusions at six shillings,—perish the thought!—but good honest serious fiction of the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. These are, for example, the haunted volumes of Ann Radcliffe, once known as the *Salvator Rosa* of British novelists; it were a positive crime to be without *THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO*, *THE ITALIAN*, and *THE SICILIAN*. We will not cite those altogether delightful histories, *THE FAIRCHILD FAMILY* or *SANDFORD AND MERTON*, because they are hard to come by; but the man who owns these monuments in their entirety can afford to disregard such latter-day necessities as *THE LIBRARY OF FAMOUS LITERATURE*. Then there are the works of Mrs. Hannah More, which could not fail to make any library respectable. Mr. Augustine Birrell has put it on record that he once paid eight shillings for a complete set; but the novice must be content to wait till

he has attained Mr. Birrell's fame, and meanwhile to pay twopence a volume for them.

A more serious mind may choose rather to devote itself to early editions of the classics, in which there is a wide field for the purchaser. Books from the university presses of about 1700 are common and cheap, and useless enough for any library. Then there are editions from that indefatigable institution the Plantine Press in Antwerp, which turned out books for over three centuries. Those dating from 1600 to 1700 are for the most part extremely common. There was a myth once current, now happily exploded, that books from the Elzevir Presses were all rare and valuable; most of them may now be obtained for about five shillings a dozen, and hideous cropped little things they are. Books printed by Janson of about the same date, and even by Stephanus of a century earlier, may be bought for very little.

The collector who specialises in poetry has perhaps the best time. The occasional poems of Pomfret, Bloomfield, Montgomery, and others of equal fame, need never cost him more than sixpence a-piece; Pomfret in particular is expensive at three-pence. But why should we say more? It is quite clear that with all this admirable material ready to hand, no man can fail to amass as large a library as he wishes in spite of the booksellers all leagued together against him.

We began this paper with a reference to *THE BADMINTON LIBRARY*; and we ought therefore to mention a few books, which bear the same relation to bookng as the Badminton bears to other sports. Books on books are innumerable, but there are one or two which stand out prominently and cause the novice an infinity of woe. First among them is Brunet,

the *ultima spes* of the ordinary collector. His bibliography is a very complete affair, so complete that the magic words *not in Brunet* are quite enough to add some shillings to the price of any book one may contemplate buying. Oddly enough, if one desires to sell the same book, the fact that it is not in Brunet seriously detracts from its value; it then becomes obvious that it is not in Brunet because it is not worthy to be there, and that it is in truth a poor volume of no esteem. The learned Frenchman is invaluable to the collector who desires to know all about a book that he has just acquired. This is the sort of information that he gives: *Il a des exempl. imprimés sur velin*. It is not much, but it is all, and it is at least enough to show the collector that his own copy, not being printed on vellum, is not worth anything. Sometimes the information varies: the book is *assez rare* or *peu commun* or *vendu 2fr. la Vallière*, or *édition faite avec soin*; but it is seldom that Brunet is communicative about any book that the collector possesses, or perhaps we should say, it is seldom that the collector possesses any book about which Brunet is communicative.

There are many other books like Brunet, and they are all reserved on the subject of the books which one possesses oneself. Books of reference, however, are not of very great interest to the novice; there are too many facts in them. What he requires is a book that ambles lightly round the subject, that prattles about the joy of picking up a rarity, without touching on the subsequent and inevitable

agony of finding that it is no rarity after all. He requires a book that is stimulating and suggestive, the sort of book in fact that Mr. Andrew Lang writes, whereby he is partially instructed and wholly fascinated. These offices Mr. Lang performs to perfection; but let not the novice be led away by his charming optimism, an optimism which might almost make us believe that LE PASTISSIER FRANÇOIS of 1655 may even now be picked up for six sous, or that the legend which we heard a few years ago, of Caxton's GAME AND PLAYE OF CHESE having been purchased at Oxford for fourpence, is true history. The novice, however, who is really bitten with bibliomania should certainly read THE LIBRARY and BOOKS and BOOKMEN. He should also read Burton's BOOK-HUNTER and find out what *serendipity* is, and whether he has it himself. But, unless he has colossal patience and a love for epical spaciousness and euphuistic magnificence (which is very dull withal) he should avoid that most voluminous person Dibdin.

It may happen that in the end the collector has succeeded in gathering together a few books of which he need not be altogether ashamed; but it is improbable that he will feel inclined to boast of them, when he reflects on the humiliations, the disappointments, and the myriad troubles which he has had to endure in their acquisition. Rather will he be inclined to glance round his shelves without prejudice, and candidly confess that, as Goethe says, "Books generally do little else but put names to our errors."

H. T. S.

THE SINNER AND THE PROBLEM.

BY ERIC PARKER.

CHAPTER XIX.

It was a wonderful night. The hay was stacked, the veriest stranger could have told you, in the corner of the field nearest the house; the jessamine glowed faintly in the light of a half-hidden moon, and the wind that fanned it was heavy with the odour of mignonette and roses. The landrail had taken her brood out on the fallows, so that the windows lacked her stick-and-comb chatter, but there came to you the purr of nightjars and the long hoot of owls, white monsters that sailed and swooped; or you looked out over the valley, and about you was the flap and squeak of bats, and the boom of beetles, and the whirr of moths, and all the million sounds and scents of a night in summer. And the Chief Butler slapped me on the shoulder as I leaned against the shutters, and asked if I intended doing anything particular that evening.

The days following my last interview with the Lady of the Lake had found me influenced by an unaccustomed longing for inactivity. True, I had made a sketch or so, well enough so far as colour went, for that was easily seen, and needed but a surface-trick or so to make what some might call a picture; but they were open books, to be read running, made by a mechanician more than by any one else. And there had been the Sinner's garden-prize, and his whole-hearted joy at receiving the few shillings that make a

boy of his likes happy. But it was a passive existence; everything was centred in that word *to-morrow*, when I was to see again the shadows of the oaks in the lake, as I saw them three months ago, — no, but differently, for there had happened much since then.

I had occupation enough with my thoughts, perhaps; but the Chief Butler meant something of an attention to me, and with as good a show of willingness as I could command I put myself at his service.

"I thought we might have a bit of a chat up in my room," said he, caring little for my bats and jessamine. "T'other chap's out, and there ain't much doing on a muggy night like this." I suppose I looked regretfully at the warm wet darkness beyond the window. He filled in his own picture. "I've a weed or so you might care to try, and a bottle of good whiskey; at least I gave four bob for it, and it ought to be drinkable at that. What do you think?"

I thought that the existence of the tobacco and spirits was sufficient reason for accepting his invitation. The Chief Butler buying four-shilling whiskey for other people, thought I, but I wondered what might be coming.

"Take a pew," said he, and shut the door. Something strange in his manner struck me, an unaccustomed joviality, a curious elation. He produced a cigar-case and proffered it; I selected a biggish cigar with some misgivings. "You'll like those, I think; at least, they ought to be

good; I gave—however, see what you think of them. Havannas are getting scarcer, they tell me.”

“It’s excellent, quite excellent,” quoth I, reproaching myself for my misgivings.

“I thought they were pretty fair. Well” (he laid the case open at my elbow), “help yourself to another when you’ve finished that. And now for the whisky.”

Whusky, thought I; but the change of vowel suited his mood, you could see. “Don’t you ever smoke?” I asked him as he produced a brand-new corkscrew.

“No, I don’t; I used to, but gave it up.” Whip came the cork, and he smelt it with an air. “I hope this is all right. You ought to get pretty decent stuff for four bob, oughtn’t you?”

The question was asked off-hand, but he waited eagerly for the inevitable answer. There was obviously vast pleasure in anticipating a compliment; and I declare (for at one time I would not have believed it) that it was a pleasure just then to answer truthfully.

“Well, you mix it as you like,” he went on. “There’s soda here; you prefer that to water, I suppose?” I did not, but there were reasons for the falsehood. “And what’s that like?” he asked. The question had been on the end of his tongue for three minutes, and he found employment in a pretended search for something; a book presumably, but he looked on the floor for it among other places.

“The whiskey is excellent, too; in fact, as good as the cigar. Are you not going to try some?”

He looked doubtfully at the bottle. “Do you know, I think I will,” he said, and filled a glass. Presently he sipped it, sat down and became contemplative. “You knew we break

up to-morrow?” he said at last. I nodded. Indeed, had I not been thinking of it for a week past? He held his glass up to the light and gazed leisurely at it. “Heard anything about me?” he asked slowly.

“I don’t think so.”

“I’ve kept it pretty dark, purposely.” There was a pause of a minute or so. “Fact is, I’m leaving this term.”

I was meant to express great surprise, and did so. He seemed waiting for something more. “You will be very much missed,” I ventured at last.

“Yes, I think I shall,” he answered with decision; “I think I shall. The old man told me so, in fact.”

“However, I suppose I may congratulate you?” His face showed that it was the right question.

“Congratulate me? On the whole, yes, I think I am to be congratulated, —not exactly on leaving this shop, you understand, but—, well, I’ve done what I set out to do—that’s what it is. I think I’m to be congratulated on that.”

“And that was?” I began interrogatively.

He settled himself in his chair and crossed a long leg over his knee. I remember noticing that his boots were particularly good ones. He saw me glance at them, and on any other occasion would have told me the cost; but this was not an ordinary occasion. “It’s a long story,” said he. “How’s the cigar going?”

“Admirably, and the whisky; and the longer the story the better.” Truly, there was something different in the man. I could not have said that a week earlier.

The Chief Butler took up the cigar-case and handled it curiously. Then he pulled out a cigar and rolled it between tentative fingers. “Not very strong, are they?” he asked.

"There's a pretty good flavour to them; you couldn't call it mild tobacco."

"Oh," said he, and laid it down with something like a sigh, I thought. Presently he took it up again and examined the label. "You don't smoke cigarettes, do you?" he asked at last.

"Caporal, if I can get them, I do; Algerian, sometimes. I generally carry some kind of cigarette, though."

"May I look at them, if you've got any on you?"

"Why, of course," said I, and handed him my case. They were Americans; I hate your Turkish and Egyptian stuff.

He regarded the open case with interest. "Do you know, I think I should rather like to try one of these," he said. And again, I would not have believed it possible that my answer could have given me so much pleasure.

He lay back in his chair, and blew the smoke gingerly at first, almost as a schoolboy smokes. Presently he seemed more at home,—took hold of it, as it were. When I glanced at him the third time he was inhaling the smoke quietly, almost dreamily. "Odd," he said, "damned odd it is."

I am not squeamish with regard to the possibilities of the English language, but I had often before arrested myself in mid-speech in the Chief Butler's company, fearing to offend. Yet the expression did not startle me then, for this was not the Chief Butler, but more of a human being, as who should say.

"Odd?" I asked.

"How it brings it all back. Twenty years ago," he said slowly, "twenty—years—ago." And he blew a mighty cloud to the ceiling. "My father was a clergyman," he went on after a little. "He died

just after I left college, died in debt."

He flipped the ash off his cigarette, and for a time was silent. Then he spoke deliberately and in short sentences. "When a man of twenty-two with no relations finds that his sole possessions in the world are a mathematical degree and five pounds, there's only one course open to him. At least I figured it out pretty clearly, and it seemed so to me. Mind you, I wasn't a man of accomplishments. I couldn't turn my hand to scribbling for papers, or painting pictures. I couldn't act worth twopence a week, couldn't sing, not a note in tune. I knew that then, and I've often been sorry about it. No, there wasn't much choice, with only five pounds.

"It's so darned easy too. Just get a note or so from your tutors and call on an agent, and the thing's done. First shove off I got a post, not a bad one either, as posts go; forty pounds a term; I've had worse since.

"There were eight of us at that place—biggish school by the sea, it was; some of them were decent chaps and some were bounders. I wonder what's become of them all now. There was Swain,—thundering great bullock of a man he was too. I remember him carrying a fellow called Tomlin under his arm round the common-room, and spanking him, because Tomlin told him he couldn't sing; said he'd make Tomlin sing, and he did too, like one o'clock. And Taff, he was a funny devil; used to rot his arithmetic class; asked 'em if fourteen gooseberries grew on three bushes, how many cats there were in a beef-steak-pie. The Head came in one day and found him in full swing,—class gaping like so many cod-fish, and a picture of a meat-pie on the blackboard. He went that term. And Kippers, too, old Kippers,—he was a queer chap. That wasn't his name you know; we called him

Kippers because he was always cheap. Lord, Lord !

"I was only there two terms ; but—I don't know, Kippers and I. We used to get down in the town and go the rounds. I was some use at billiards in those days, and so was he. When we'd finished the lot,—still, most of the bobbies knew us, if there'd been any row. Kippers used to turn up late for breakfast,—couldn't touch a thing ; said he thought he could toy with a devilled sparrow's leg. The masters used to breakfast at the college, you know, not at the school. Then I'd come in, worse than Kippers. And there was Swain gulping down great shovelfuls of porridge, and Tomlin letting into the cold bacon like a good 'un. Of course, there'd have been a row if we hadn't turned up to breakfast at all, and as it was, Carver (he was a sort of head-usher, and a confounded prig at the price we thought him) used to sit up and snort a bit when we weighed in with hock and seltzer instead of tea. Still, he wasn't a bad sort after all, for he never said a word to the Head about us ; and he might have made things deuced unpleasant. Taff, for instance,—Carver knew all about Taff and tried to have it out with him, said it wasn't playing the game to rot your arithmetic class when you were paid to teach 'em two and two, and so on ; and some other things he said, too, because Taff didn't play football with the boys as we were supposed to do. Well, Taff got angry then ; I think he was a bit ashamed of himself really, but he went on rotting his class to rile Carver, and hadn't been at it ten days before the Head nailed the whole show, pie and all. Taff couldn't get work after that. Carver lent him a fiver.

"Kippers was only there one term ; he quarrelled with Carver before he went, like most of us. Carver got

rather touchy because Kippers liked to play the piano when he came in at night, and he didn't always come in as early as he might have, either. Kippers said it wasn't Carver's or any one else's business how he spent his evenings ; and Carver said quite quietly he didn't care how Kippers spent his evenings, or where he spent them, or whether he spent them at all,—didn't care enough about him in fact—but he wasn't going to be waked up at two o'clock in the morning by a tipsy puppy trying to sit straight on a music-stool and playing the piano with his foot and a gin-bottle. That riled Kippers, because he could play and it didn't matter if he was drunk or sober,—he seemed sort of at home with it, if you know what I mean—so he chucked the milk-jug at Carver and went out in a tearing rage, and wrote his resignation bang away. The Head wasn't sorry, I should fancy. Kippers ! I wonder now—

"Then there was Larson. He was a rum cove, always thinking about his health. I don't believe there was anything the matter with him, except that he ate too much. He said he wanted to build up his constitution or some such rot, so he used to swallow buckets of rice-pudding and prunes at lunch, because rice-pudding was starch and prunes were pills ; I forget exactly how he put it. Then he was fearfully particular about tea and tannin and stewed leaves, and wouldn't drink the stuff unless he'd seen it made, so to speak. In the evening he'd swill great cups of cocoa and go to bed holding his stomach with both hands, and hoping he'd feel a bit more built up the next morning. Then at breakfast Swain would whisper to Tomlin that Larson was looking terribly pulled down, poor devil, and Larson would cheer up like anything and go for the porridge all over again.

And what an appetite he had. That rice—

"Of course, Carver and Swain and Tomlin, they were all right. Carver's got a school of his own now, and Swain's a parson; his people gave him a living I think. Tomlin came in for some money. They were all right—steady I mean, and so on. But the rest of us,—bar Larson, and he was always thinking about his digestion—"

The Chief Butler stopped, looked at me, and astonished me with this apparently irrelevant question. "Ever done anything with a revolver, potting at a bottle, I mean,—anything of that sort? Well, I dare say you know it isn't as easy as it looks. The thing seems as if it must be built crooked, and you get humbugging with the mechanism of it—looking down the barrel and so on, and then the jury—

"Eh? Oh, well, it was this way. There was a school near us we used to play at football, and we got to know the masters there through meeting them down in the town, and at the club. There was a chap there named Mellish who was rather older than the rest of us; in fact, he was some way over fifty, though we didn't think he was so much just then, for he used to humbug about with us a good bit, and sometimes you'd hardly have thought he was much older than we were, unless you caught him in a bad light, or when he wasn't remembering. Once at the club he saw me staring at him when he looked like that, and I suppose he knew what I was thinking, for he gave a little jump and a smile and spanked Carver, who was trying a nastyish losing hazard. Carver swore because he missed it, but when he saw who it was he just laughed and said it was after he'd made the shot and it didn't baulk him. I think he knew Mellish

was feeling pretty bad: we just thought he was an ass.

"Mellish seemed to cotton to me more than to the others; we used to go out walks together, and that was how it all came about. Mellish, you see, knew one or two of the farmers round the place, and he got one of them to let him put up a revolver-range in a field there was, and he and I used to pot about there, bottles, you know, and sardine-tins and apples; an apple don't look very big at twenty yards. I couldn't hit the things. We used to put up six in a row on lathes at different heights and then walk up to them from catch distances, firing as quickly as you could,—same as if men were running at you—because Mellish used to talk about going to California and said it would come in useful. He brought an old coat one day, and amused himself firing through the side-pockets; it was rummy to see him. Then another day Carver came, and I thought he looked a bit queerly at Mellish now and again, but he never said anything at the time. Well, one Saturday Mellish asked me to go with him to this farmer's, and on the way he got talking about his prospects and so on, said he was an old man and he'd never get another post, and that he didn't know what he should do, because he hadn't any money or any people to go to; he was only fit to teach quadratics and irregular verbs, and couldn't take to another business at his time of life. I asked him what he was driving at, and then it came out he'd had notice to go; at least, he'd been advised to resign, as the Head wanted a younger man for his work. Well, it seemed he'd tried mining-shares to get a bit of capital together to start again, and the mine had gone wrong. He asked what he'd better do. He was beastly melancholy; I'd never seen him like it

before, and I said people had been in worse holes than that before,—I don't know what I said. However, before we came to the farmer's field he cheered up wonderfully, and laughed at me for missing a great tin kettle we put up to shoot at, till I thought he'd never stop. He knocked the spout off the thing himself, and laughed at that too. Then we stuck up the lathes and the apples, and I had my six shots and got two of them, and jolly proud I was, for I'd never got more than one before and not often that. Well, I put up the apples for Mellish, and he went and blazed away at them. When he stopped he hadn't hit one,—he was a first-class shot—and he seemed puzzled by the set of his face. I saw him looking pretty hard at the revolver, and he said something about its being foul; he was squinting down the barrel when he spoke. It never occurred to me to stop him, for I thought he'd fired all six. Well, there was a bang and he dropped; that's all I ever knew about it. The bullet went in at his cheek—

"You've seen dead men before? Well, I hadn't. I didn't think he was dead, because he seemed looking at something,—something miles and miles away it was — staring and staring. Of course, I got the farmer's wife, — said there'd been an accident. She called some of the men, and between us we carried him in. But his eyes — they got set I suppose.

"Have you ever been in a real thundering funk? If you had asked me that once, I shouldn't have known what you meant. It was that face; it used to come round me and stare at me; it wasn't so bad in the daytime, though it would come then, sometimes; but at night — God! I had to go up-stairs in the dark to get to bed, and all the way it kept

jigging in front of me, going a little way back and then coming at me again, right into my face,—white it was, and the eyes staring and the jaw dropped. Have you ever noticed what it looks like when the jaw of a man drops as far as it will go? And when I got to my room I couldn't find the matches. It took me ages to find them, and all the while I was saying, 'That terrible face, that terrible face,' over and over again, though I didn't know it till there was a light. I tell you, for days I saw that thing. I dreaded being alone. I used to invent all sorts of excuses for being with people. Once in broad daylight it came; it was on a horribly tall body, and it came and stooped over my shoulder and looked at me upside down. That was a week afterwards. I hoped it would have gone, you know. I got drunk that night,—it took a long while—and I put out the light. After that it didn't come again.

"I left the school that term, and went for another place. You see, I wanted to save. I've been saving ever since, steadily. It has changed me, I know; because one has to give up a lot of things, whiskey, for instance, and tobacco. I couldn't make up my mind about tobacco for a long time; but I'm glad I did—I'm glad I did. And shaving too,—I grew a beard once, but it wouldn't have paid, because it made me look older. That shows you what little things I've thought about.

"But it has changed me. For one thing, I've found it awfully hard to think about anything else; and the younger men have always laughed at me when I've begun gassing about it. That's only natural, I suppose, but it's their game to save, you know; it's their game, and they none of them do it.

"Of course, it has been hard work. I've been very thorough about it, very thorough, calculating things beforehand, you know. Here, I'll show you something."

The Chief Butler arose, went to a drawer, unlocked it and produced—the black leather book.

"I'm not going to bore you with all of it," he said. "Let me see; yes, July 31st." And he pointed to an item which read: *cigars 4s. 6d.—whiskey 4s.—two siphons soda-water 9d.—9s. 3d.* "I calculated that a fortnight ago," he said. "I knew you wouldn't be out to-night, because of your packing." He looked at the figures pensively. "It may seem a lot," he said, "for one evening, —nine-and-threepence—but I meant to spend it, and I think I'm justified. I've done what I set out to do."

"And that was, exactly?"

"To save a certain sum of money, a thousand pounds, in fact. I've saved that, and a little over."

"You are a very wonderful man," I said.

"In some ways I think I am," he replied; "yes, in some ways—one way, at all events." He picked up the book. "I've had this for twenty years now," he said, "and during those twenty years I've never made a real miscalculation. Everything has cost what I thought it would; I've always been able to ink in my figures, so to speak. Everything I've set out to do I've done,—in the first part of the book."

"The first part?"

"It's divided into two parts, you see. Part one, while I'm still an assistant-master, and part two, when I've got a school of my own. The lease of that school-house, for instance; I made it out worth so much, and I got it for that much, after a bit. Yes, I've always done what I set out to do in the first part,—all

except one thing I haven't been able to try yet."

"What is that?" I asked.

He hesitated. "I meant to tell you. Somehow,—I think I'll wait till to-morrow," he said at last. "If it comes off all right, I'll ask you to drink my health."

"Good heavens," said I, "I forgot;" and I raised my glass, but he stopped me. "No, wait till to-morrow." He strode across to a cupboard and opened the door. "See there," he said; there was a bottle of champagne. "Wait till to-morrow," he repeated, and he bade me good-night.

I went to my room and leaned out over the sill. The moon was high, and there was little doing between me and the sky,—indigo powdered with a dust of brilliants. Down wind and up the house-wall came the scent of mignonette and the warm breath of hay and meadow-sweet from the sloping field, and I drew in large draughts of it, and let my thoughts run riot back through the three summer months I had spent in that happy countryside. I thought of the first evening I had sat under my laburnum tree and looked out over the valley; of the guileless pair of urchins who had installed themselves as my companions from the outset; of the wonderful nights when the nightingales called up the valley to me to come and see what secrets the primroses and bluebells by the lake-side could tell me; of the strange story of the Other Man, and then of the quaint history I had heard that evening. And I fell to guessing at what might be the one thing in the first part that the Chief Butler had reserved until to-morrow. But that word *to-morrow* set me thinking of what the morning held in store for me also, and over that I fell asleep.

CHAPTER XX.

LITTLE did I dream (of all things !) who was to precede me to the lake ; nor much of that bottle of champagne, though that had stirred my curiosity not a little. But at ten o'clock the next morning, looking out of my window, I beheld the Chief Butler, top-hatted and grave as of yore, setting out—lake-wards ! And I watched him till he disappeared in the trees.

If I was astonished at this at the moment, and if I began to wonder at his reason, and had almost decided that he had deferred until to-day the farewell necessary to be taken from so near a neighbour, I was saved from further speculation by the appearance on the scene of the Sinner. He and the Problem also had witnessed the Chief Butler's departure.

"Did you see?" said the Sinner. "Isn't it a nuisance? He's going down to see my cousin's gardener; on business, he said; I heard him say so at breakfast."

"Is that so, Sinner? But why is it a nuisance?"

"Because we've got to go and get him a cab. You see, we're the only two left, because all the boys go away early on the last day; and it takes ever so long to get cabs."

"I'm very sorry, Sinner. But isn't the inn where you get cabs on the way to the lake?" The Sinner confessed that it was. "Then why not order the cab on the way?"

"But,—but I thought you were coming with us down to the lake. And then, if we came back here, it would take—"

"I see. Then I'm the nuisance really, it seems?"

"I didn't mean that," said the Sinner doubtfully.

The obvious solution of the difficulty was for me to finish my packing

and to follow the boys alone, a course of action which appeared to commend itself to them, and the last I saw of them was a wave from the Sinner's hat; he was shouting at me from the corner to be quick with my packing.

Before I had finished that, the Chief Butler returned. He walked slowly, whipping at the poppy-heads with his stick. When he neared my window he looked up, caught my eye, and looked down again. He entered the house. Presently a cab drove past, bound for the school. The Chief Butler hailed it from the doorstep; there ensued a short altercation (I imagined a lapse in the Sinner's memory) and the Chief Butler's hand went to his pocket. Presently there was a little procession of lackeys and servant-maids bearing portmanteaux and boxes. The procession took ten minutes or so, and I watched it from my window. There was a final search for possible oversights, and the coachman climbed upon his box. It occurred to me to go down, and then I remembered that the Chief Butler had seen me at my window. I hesitated, and the cab drove away.

I turned to my packing. When I thought about it, things came clearer. I thought of all the Chief Butler had said to me the evening before; especially, of course, of his reference to the one thing in the first part of the book which, unlike the rest, he was unable to ink in, as he put it. I called to mind his hesitant answers to my questions when first I inquired of him concerning the inmates of the red-brick house in the valley; his meditative acquiescence when I had asked him if he would not need a wife to help him keep his school-in-the-air going; his self-assurance with regard to his calculations for the future. There was no doubt about it; he had asked the Lady of the Lake—no, but it was absurd! Why, he did not speak to her

once a month! He had been twelve years at the school; she must have been a baby of—but it was absurd!

Yet was it not possible that the man, accustomed for twenty years to regard the future as something to be mapped out exactly, forecast with precision and inevitably *inked in*, had somehow built his wish into his accounts,—had dated in his acceptance hardly so much as a future possibility, rather as a future fact? I could think of no other conclusion; and then,—the bottle of champagne.

That set me on another train of thought, for the Chief Butler had not said good-bye to me, not a word of farewell in any shape or form. Perhaps the cab,—perhaps he was taking away his goods in instalments. I went down to his room; it looked bare enough, but then, there was never over much furniture to boast of. The cupboard was empty; he had taken away what was there last night, and there were no healths to be drunk after all. There was not a doubt about anything; and as if to clinch matters, before I finished my packing, his cab (you could not mistake the sorry fleabitten white) came rattling back through the gates as I idly stared out over the valley.

That reminded me of the time. Doubtless the Sinner and the Problem were even now playing havoc with the trout and the butterflies; and I set off down the hill, and I know,—though I felt a strange hesitancy in going—that there was but one thought worth thinking then. Had not to-morrow come?

The sun was on the woods, and the sun was on the water just as it had been that day when first I saw the Lady of the Lake among her swans. And there lay the Problem among the bracken, reading, just as he lay among the primroses on the day when I drew my picture of the Sinner; and the

Sinner was over knees in the brook, rejoicing with a net and wet knickerbockers. And the Lady of the Lake herself stood on the bank of the stream and turned to meet me as I came.

"We are here, as you see, all three of us. We look happy enough, don't we?" She picked up a pebble and dropped it neatly in front of the Sinner, who paused to greet me cheerfully. "Look at that child! Is there a happier mortal in the world at this moment, do you suppose?"

"Oh, I nearly got it," cried the Sinner, and saved himself from perils of deep waters by an over-hanging bough.

"And the other, too,—but he is a quaint little person. He came down here this morning, and almost the first words he said to me were to beg me never to leave him,—never to go away, I think he put it."

"And you said?"

"Oh, I told him that I should be here always, and that he should come whenever he liked, and that he was a good boy, and lots of other things. Then I made him a nosegay and he is as happy as the day is long. Aren't you?" she called. The Problem looked up questioningly. "You're quite happy, aren't you?" she repeated.

The Problem said "Yes, thank you," (he was ever of a polite habit), and returned contentedly to his book.

Just then the Sinner uttered a cry of joy, splashed out of the brook and stood exultant before us. "I've got one,—a real one, isn't it?—a trout."

It was a very small speckled being, and it flapped in a disheartened way at the bottom of the net.

"It is indeed. But my dear Sinner, look—you're standing on your stockings. Run and put the trout in the can."

The Sinner, after a doubtful glance

at wet footprints on a black stocking, repaired to the edge of the brook, and searched among the reeds. Then he brought his capture to us, restored to its natural element.

"Why, Sinner, that's my paint-water bottle. Where did you get it?"

"Oh, is it yours? I found it by the lake. I thought it was like yours, but then I didn't think you would have forgotten it." So I had left it by the lake, when that miserable portrait—but I was resolved to think no more of that. The Sinner regarded it wistfully. "Shall I put it away?" he asked.

"No, Sinner, no; you may have it, all for your very own."

"Oh, thank you," said the Sinner. "I think it likes it, you know," he added, examining his prisoner with attention.

"That reminds me," said the Lady of the Lake; "I picked up what I think is one of your brushes." She produced from her pocket my wash-brush. My paint-water bottle, then, was not all I had forgotten. "What in the world is a brush of that size used for?" she went on.

"The work I am most fond of, skies chiefly,—heaven, if you're poetical."

"Wouldn't it do for washing out rather well? Washing out something you didn't like, for instance?"

"It was not last used for that," I answered, looking into her eyes. I thought she dropped them for the fraction of a second. I declare I had forgotten the boys altogether.

"It must have done a lot of work in its time," she observed, looking at it critically, and then back at myself.

"If I were to tell you all the work that brush has done, I should be

telling you a long story. And part of it—supposing of course that it concerned anyone who was of the slightest importance to yourself, which I have every reason to believe is not the case—part of it might be considered interesting. You might even find it amusing."

The Sinner was listening in rapt silence. "Oh, do tell us," he said; and I am sure the Lady of the Lake started at his voice.

"You see, Sinner," said I, "this brush belonged to a very old friend of mine." I took it from her hand as I spoke. "And once he painted a very wonderful picture; indeed, I believe he hardly knew himself how he had painted the picture, it was so wonderful. And some one,—he never could tell why—hated this picture, and took this brush and daubed it all over until you couldn't tell there had ever been a picture at all."

"And what did he do?" questioned the Sinner with breathless interest.

"What did he do, Sinner? Really, I hardly know; in fact I'm not sure that he did anything particular. I think he was so dumbfounded by the fact that the picture he had painted was gone,—for he loved it, you see, all the time he was painting it—that for a little time he went mad." I heard the Lady of the Lake catch her breath. "And then he recovered; but he knew he could never be the same afterwards, because he had lost this picture; unless, of course—unless—"

"Unless what?" asked the Sinner.

But at that moment a black and white butterfly floated lazily over the bracken to a thorn-bush. The Sinner forgot my story; and I was left with the Lady of the Lake, who stood facing me.

THE MAN IN THE RANKS.

It has been for some time obvious that many changes must be made in the composition, organisation, and training of our military forces, if any real benefit is to be drawn from the lessons taught us by the course of events in South Africa. That many changes are to be made the Secretary for War has now promised us; but it is not here proposed to attempt any criticism of those changes, partly because this paper was practically written before they had been made public, and partly because its main theme comes only incidentally within their scope. It is an extremely important feature in any scheme of military reform, and will need to be most carefully considered, as Mr. Brodrick is doubtless well convinced; but it was of course impossible to labour every point in so comprehensive a scheme within the compass of a single speech.

If events at the theatre of war have proved one point beyond all others it is that our existing military organisation is inadequate to the needs of the Empire. While the British army, stiffened by its reserves, backed by the enthusiastic loyalty and material support of the Colonies, and assisted by its own auxiliary forces, is engaged in a struggle in one part of the globe, troubles arising in other quarters serve to point the moral that it is unwise to have all our eggs in one basket. It would be absurd, of course, to suggest that the resources of the Empire have been exhausted by the necessary display of strength in South Africa; to believe that we can rely in the future upon our small

standing army alone to keep the British flag flying in all quarters of the globe would be equally chimerical. The present campaign has also afforded incontestable proof that the British as a race have not deteriorated in any of those qualities that go to the making of first-rate soldiers, and, in consequence, that a rich material exists and may be drawn upon, under satisfactory conditions, for the purpose of increasing the strength of the Imperial army. That the existing strength, at least, of the army must be maintained, on the withdrawal of the strong incitement to patriotic fervour which the stress of present circumstances has created, needs no demonstration; the difficulty will be found in devising the satisfactory conditions.

The additional strength supplied by the colonial and auxiliary forces will of course be withdrawn with the pressure of the occasion, and one can only accept the fact while regretting that the ordinary conditions of military service do not afford sufficient inducement to these splendid fellows to throw in their lot with the trained troops they have so ably re-inforced at a critical period of our history. Nobody could expect the majority of those who responded so nobly to the Nation's call for volunteers to look upon life in the ranks as a desirable career in the piping times of peace. Yet it becomes clearer every day that without their assistance our small standing army would have found it a terrible task to reach Pretoria, whether by way of the Tugela or across the Orange River; not, let

it be said, through any want of professional capacity in either officers or men, but from sheer lack of numbers.

Assuming our present system of voluntary enlistment to be the only possible one, let us consider to what extent it is responsible for the difficulty which we shall be compelled to recognise on every occasion that land-operations on a large scale are forced upon us,—the difficulty, that is to say, of numbers. Much has been said and written with regard to the rival claims of long and short service systems, but it is very questionable whether the arguments for or against either can affect the main consideration before us, that of the sufficiency or otherwise of a voluntary army. To exactly grasp the position it will be necessary to go to the root of the matter and to consider at once why men enlist at all; and despite a popular belief to the contrary it may be said that a reply to this momentous question could not be given in a single concise sentence.

Those who accept the shilling differ so widely in character, early training, and social position, that the impossibility of assigning a general reason or cause for their action is obvious; but whatever difficulty the subject may present, it is absolutely necessary to a comprehensive study of this matter of voluntary enlistment that we should ascertain how it happens that in the course of a single year upwards of twenty-eight thousand men offer themselves for military service. Is it not a surprising fact that in this prosperous country so many young fellows are to be found ready, of their own free will, to cut themselves adrift from all domestic ties and associations, discarding opportunities for securing a comfortable competency in peaceful avocations, to enter upon the life of vicissitude and

danger presented by a career in the ranks? It is to the explanation of this fact that the authorities must look in their anxiety to provide means for ensuring a steady, constant, and increasing supply of recruits for the army.

The explanation is not to be found in the influence which many will suppose to exercise the greatest power,—the influence of patriotism. It is rarely indeed that a man becomes a soldier in time of peace under the influence of this motive. The patriotic sentiment may be present in all cases to the extent of a belief that a man cannot engage in a more honourable service than that of fighting his country's battles, but in ordinary times, when we are not engaged in fighting or in preparing to fight, there is no call for such an exhibition of patriotism as that which we have proudly witnessed in recent days. It almost invariably happens that an immediate increase of recruits marks any threat of war, and that is, so far, a satisfactory proof of patriotic feeling; but we cannot afford to wait for the opening of hostilities before gathering an army together. Recent events tend to prove (if proof were needed) that the military instinct is inherent in the British race, and even before the call to arms we had ample evidence of that fact in the spread of the Volunteer movement. Nothing is more striking to the stranger in London than the number of men to be seen about the streets in uniform on any Saturday afternoon; it is a half-holiday, and the youthful citizen is keen upon the enjoyable relaxation to be obtained in the exercise of arms. Take again the evidence provided by the military camps that are formed on established holidays; you find men from all parts of the kingdom, from town and rural district

alike, assembling for training as soldiers; they know of no better way of spending a holiday, these men of peace, than by coming together, often at much expense and personal inconvenience, to obtain instruction in the art of war and fit themselves for the duty of defending hearth and home.

There is indeed no lack of patriotism in these islands; but in times of peace we must not look for such a display of the quality as would indicate a preference for barrack-life over all other pursuits.

In popular belief there seem to be but two causes that send a man into the ranks,—destitution, and the attractions of a smart uniform. While taking exception to this belief as a whole we may admit that want and a love of display are two strong supports of the recruiting-market. Temporary depression in trade invariably results in an increase of recruits; indeed it has been affirmed that the supply of soldiers is entirely regulated by the state of the labour-market. If this view of the matter be correct then the periodical disturbances of business that result from the strikes and lock-outs which are now so deplorably common are not altogether unmixed evils. To men who have fallen out of the running in one line of life and are unable to procure employment in any other, the recruiting-sergeant may appear as a saviour; but only, we may be sure, when the position has become inevitable after a brave struggle to secure a livelihood by other means than the acceptance of a service entailing deprivation of liberty.

Simple, honest rustics, labouring men of bucolic origin who have drifted to the great urban centres in search of work, town-bred toilers and artisans, all of them men whose only prospect it has been to fight through the battle

of life in the sweat of their brows, but who have approached perilously near to want through nothing but lack of employment, such men are to be found with every batch of recruits arriving at a military depot. That many thoughtless youths are unable to withstand the attraction of a showy dress and the pomp and circumstance of military life will be readily granted. But it may be argued that in neither of these cases do we obtain genuine volunteers; that they are in one case driven, and in the other lured to a service which should more properly stand upon its merits as a line of employment offering material advantages and prospects to those prepared to adopt it. From this position it is an easy stage to an assertion that the word *voluntary* is altogether misapplied in connection with our system of enlistment. The answer, of course, must be that even in these cases the men are volunteers in the truest sense, inasmuch as they offer their services spontaneously; but that these two categories do not, as popularly supposed, cover the whole ground of recruiting influence. Occasionally, it may be, men seek the army as a sanctuary, as a refuge in the seclusion of which they may hope to elude the most vigilant pursuit, and hide in safety until the storm which threatened to overwhelm them has passed. Domestic strife, and family differences of all kinds, are also important factors in the supply of recruits; and a salve for blighted affections is not infrequently sought and found in the wandering life of a soldier. Again, there are many cases of loss of position and means which throw upon the world men who have not been trained to a handicraft or taught to labour, men who cannot dig and who would rather be hanged than beg; volunteers are furnished by all such causes.

These instances are mentioned only

as causes springing from chance occurrences. It is not urged that they account for any large proportion of a year's recruits, or that we are entirely dependent upon such precarious sources of supply; these extraordinary reasons for enlistment could be multiplied many times, no doubt, but the influences at work to provide us with a standing army are surely not all ascribable to the romantic and pathetic incidents and accidents of life.

What is to be said, for instance, in favour of military service as an employment promising some small measure of success in life, and how many of the great body of recruits shown in the *PRELIMINARY RETURN OF THE BRITISH ARMY* have considered their prospects from that point of view?

It is certain that we have reached a stage in the history of the British army when the conditions of enlistment must be seriously reconsidered; and it will depend very largely upon the answer to the foregoing question whether the occasion can be met by modifying the existing regulations, or will demand drastic reform. If military service offers nothing but an immediate competence, or temporary relief from pressing ills, the supply of recruits must continue to depend upon sources which cannot be expected to yield the best material, either in quantity or quality. On the other hand, when those who enlist are actuated by the laudable desire of securing a position equal or superior to any they could hope to attain in civil life, when they can regard the service as one affording scope for the exercise of talent and ability, or for the display of those attributes of character which would go far to command success in any other line of life, then, indeed, we may trust to a constant supply of recruits to be regulated solely by the nation's needs.

What, then, is the present position of the matter? We know, of course, that, as the case stands to-day, many men enlist with a direct view to advancement in the service. There are those, for instance, who join with the avowed intention of obtaining the commissions which they failed to secure by the usual course; but these men are usually supported by family influence and their colonel's foreknowledge of the object with which they have joined the ranks, and the regulations afford every facility for the attainment of their desire. To follow up this modern feature of recruiting it would be necessary to go into the whole question of promotion from the ranks, a subject, certainly, that has a direct bearing upon the matter of this paper, but one which cannot now be exhaustively dealt with. It will be sufficient to state here that the provision of any number of such commissions would not affect recruiting for the subordinate ranks to any appreciable extent. The supply of officers is one question: to keep the ranks filled is another; and the simplicity of the first does not afford a solution to the latter.

The doubtful point at present is whether the service offers greater, or even equal, advantages to those afforded by other avocations to respectable, intelligent, fairly well educated men who depend upon merit alone for success. It would be the wisdom of fools to suppose that twenty-eight thousand men are to be attracted each year by the military fashion-plates strung to the railings of the National Gallery, St. Martin's disused burial-ground, and other conspicuous places where recruiting-sergeants congregate. Our military strength may be maintained by chance, but in these days of universal education we must look to other chances than the vanity of the individual; until the Service can

be accepted as a career in which young men of good class may hope to do as well as those engaged in other pursuits, the supply of recruits will, and must, remain a matter of grand uncertainty.

One great drawback to recruiting undoubtedly is that a career in the ranks cannot now be adopted as the profession of a life-time. If the Service be not widely known for the advantages it offers, it is certainly familiar to the many as a line of life which leads to nothing but loss of social position. The step taken by the man who enlists to-day is, in one sense, as irrevocable as it would have been in the old days when men joined for unlimited service; he falls out of the running in civil life and his subsequent career will be sensibly affected by that fact. Of no other man can it be so truly said as of the soldier that he knows not his future; his period of service in the ranks may be short, but his future will furnish confirmation of the saying, "Once start a being out of the usual course of existence and many and strange will be his adventures ere he once more be allowed to regain the common stream and be permitted to float down in silent tranquility to the grave common to all." The difficult point to determine in the case of the soldier is the exact period when he will be allowed to regain the common stream; it certainly does not necessarily synchronise with his discharge from the army.

So long as that blot remains on our system of recruiting the maintenance of a proper numerical strength will depend upon chance; the supply of recruits will be extremely irregular, varying with the conditions of trade and a man's prospects of obtaining a livelihood elsewhere than in the military service of his country; and the old problem of how to popularise

an unpopular service will remain unsolved.

The efficiency of an army as a whole must depend to a great extent upon the rapidity with which gaps can be filled. The fighting-machine may be highly efficient so far as the capabilities that result from training are concerned, but the foundation upon which it is reared must be a plentiful supply of recruits.

What is the present position? A few years ago an Under Secretary of State for War had to confess in the House of Commons, when dealing with the question of recruiting for additional battalions of the Guards, that the difficulty of procuring recruits had been increased and intensified by the mere chance that the Jubilee celebrations of that year of grace in which he was speaking provided temporary employment to the classes from which the supply is generally drawn. Has the position so far improved that we can with confidence propose in the Army Estimates for the current year to add battalions and batteries to an army never yet freed from that difficulty of procuring recruits in anything like constantly sufficient numbers? Not, surely, if we still rely on the belief, or rest in the hope, that the chances arising from romance, sentiment, and want will continue propitious.

Now and again we hear an opinion expressed, with great hesitancy it is true, that the one remedy for a paucity of recruits is conscription. One can understand and appreciate the hesitation of those who would express this conviction; it is very disturbing, and scares the man in the street even more than do the reported failures of generals in the field. It trenches somewhat on the liberty of the subject, and he would be a bold man in a British crowd who would not pause and reflect before giving

utterance to the distasteful word. There is a semblance of resorting to extremes in any suggestions favouring conscription, and in this matter the British public is inclined to discern virtue in half-measures. Admitting that it becomes more clearly evident every year that the opportunities for securing comfortable subsistence in civil life and, underlying and over-reaching all, the spread of education, render it imperative that something should be done to relieve the difficulty of procuring recruits, even so the country is not at present prepared to calmly consider, much less to entertain, any proposals for universal conscription. In seeking a solution of the difficulty therefore, we must have regard for the happy mean, and remodel our existing system by cutting away objectionable features and providing additional inducements to desirable young men to join.

Before any steps can be taken to this end, however, it must be fully recognised that the recruiting-market is in direct competition with all other avenues of employment. We live in an age of competition, and in the matter of securing a livelihood we are all Ishmaelites, the one to the other, by force of present circumstances. A proper appreciation of this feature of the case points to the necessity for improving the social position of the soldier, and ensuring that he shall not be hampered on return to a civil career, or be made to suffer in after years for having devoted the best part of his life to the service of his country. There is no occasion to talk of "a clean sweep" or to have recourse to an entirely new, possibly dangerous, and, from a national point of view, unquestionably disagreeable system. The British army, we must all allow, has not done badly in less exacting times

on the prop of recruiting by chance, and the old stick may be permitted to stand as still serviceable; to the shelter afforded by enlistment must be added a prospect of continuous employment, not necessarily in the army, and a position in life equal to any to be secured in other pursuits by men of ordinary ability and good character. By these means we may hope to stave off conscription; in this direction lies one possible solution of the recruiting-difficulty.

Proposals are abroad for a substantial increase of our land-forces, and if we are not to be satisfied with the mere addition of cadres to existing battalions we must realise that we can cling no longer in fancied security to a system which has lagged behind the requirements of the time. And now is the moment to make an effort to remedy the faults of that system. THE BATTLE OF DORKING, and all the vast crop of literature which has sprung from that seed, may have served to educate the public in the past, but to-day the British Public stands in no need of tutoring in a matter of such vital importance to the Empire as the efficiency of its army; the campaign in South Africa has illustrated and emphasised our needs, and the country is prepared to profit by the lessons it has taught us.

Those who have advocated an increase in the soldier's pay as the only panacea for the recruiting difficulty which invariably follows the transition from a state of war to one of peace, will learn with something of a shock that Mr. Brodrick does not propose to increase it. "I have myself," he said, "the gravest doubts whether any increased pay we could give, unless we gave something like double, would really bring in a different stamp of recruit." It is possible that Mr. Brodrick will have to reconsider his determination before his

six new army-corps are established. Yet an increase, and even a substantial increase, of pay is by no means the only solution of the problem; and among other things must be included the position assigned to the soldier in our unwritten code of social classification. The now almost universal adoption of the title *esquire* would seem to have elevated the general populace of these islands to a social height from which the ex-soldier stands out as a nonentity. It need not be a matter of doubt that this condition of service, of becoming one of a class apart, often operates as a deterrent to desirable young men who would otherwise take the step to which they are prompted by inclination, of enlisting with the single view and intention of becoming soldiers by profession. It may even be accepted without question that many, who are already soldiers at heart, succeed in restraining their desire for a military career for fear of losing caste, and of being classed for the remainder of their days in a position below that they already occupy in civil life.

Society has been described as "the intercourse of persons on a footing of equality, real or apparent." This severely qualified definition very accurately describes the section of military society to be found in the barrack-room. In any large batch of recruits arriving at a military depot are to be found representatives of many and various sections of civil society, from low, through all the varying degrees of respectability and gentility, to high. From a close consideration of the *personnel* of our army it would appear that we must now have reached the condition of perfection so pithily described by the Duke of Wellington: "We must compose our army of soldiers drawn from all classes of the population of the country; from the good and middling, as well in rank as

in education, as from the bad; and not as other nations, and we in particular do, from the bad only." Clearly we have made most satisfactory progress in the direction desiderated by the Great Duke in the interval between the Peninsular and the South African campaigns, and it is necessary that we should give full recognition to that fact.

From the date of enlistment all soldiers are placed on a footing of equality. Their positions in civil society, real or apparent, are lost to them; men of all classes, of the good and middling, as well in rank as in education, are clothed, fed, housed, and in every respect treated as a class apart,—as soldiers. They are stripped of all outward and visible signs of social degree; their very individuality is lost in uniforms of a precise pattern and colour; they are required to perform the same duties, and are in every respect reduced to one dead level. And the question may be asked,—is a proper appreciation accorded to the position of a soldier viewed from this stand-point? That question may well be put now when the nation is about to remodel the composition and increase the strength of its military forces; because if we hope to persuade a larger proportion of the populace of these islands to accept this distasteful condition, it will be necessary to convince them that it is not a process of levelling down.

A higher standard of education and, let us hope, of morals also, obtains in this day, and the only resemblance that the majority of our soldiers bear to the brave men of old is to be found in inherited courage and a coat of a particular colour. That coat, probably, has more to do with the degree of estimation in which the wearer is held by his brother of more sombre attire than aught else. In the building days of the British

Empire it could, no doubt, be said with truth that the ranks of the army were composed of the dregs of society, the sweepings of prisons, the scum of the gutters, of the vicious and dangerous; in short, of those unwilling or unable to contribute in any form to the common good of society. There is no end to the opprobrious terms in which the wearers of the Sovereign's uniform have been referred to in the past, and it has done nothing to enhance the attractions that military life offers to the respectable youth of the country. The moral character and intellectual attainments of the soldier to-day differ so widely from those that obtained in the Duke of Wellington's time, that all recollection of the abusive epithets used to characterise those who donned the most honourable garb that men can wear might be dismissed as a matter pertaining to ancient military history, were it not that some of the reproach formerly applied to a class has clung to the uniform by which it was distinguished.

Evidence of this fact has, from time to time, been afforded by cases brought in local courts to determine the right of soldiers in uniform to any part of a house of entertainment or refreshment to which their civil brethren would claim admission without producing guarantee of high social standing. The one stipulation, ability to pay, deemed sufficient in the case of the civilian, would not apply to the soldier, unless and until he divested himself of his coat and other insignia of the most honourable profession in which a man can engage.

Again, the very fact that it has been found necessary to invoke the aid of special legislation to prevent the use, or, rather, the degrading misuse, of uniforms for purposes of advertisement tends to prove that the distinctive dress of a soldier is not

invariably accepted as a manifest token of patriotism entitled to universal respect. With regard to this matter of dress, one is disposed to wonder how far these slights to the cloth will account for the privilege of wearing mufti being held in esteem by military men, and even to question the wisdom of permitting that privilege to stand at all. The occasional appearance of a British officer in the uniform of his profession would impart a little brightness and a welcome variety to the dull streets of our towns; and it would not be absurd to argue that the civilian, labouring under a misapprehension as to the real attributes of rankers in red, may draw his own inferences and conclusions from the fact that the uniform of an officer is seldom seen outside the barrack-gate. The levelling effect of uniform is unquestionable, but in these days the red coat should not be held to mark the man of inferior degree; when recruits are drawn from all classes, the process of levelling for the vicious and bad has an upward tendency, and it cannot be said that one loses by association with his equals or his betters. We must needs level up until the Sovereign's uniform becomes a passport to good society and commands the esteem and warm-hearted regard of all.

The character of the individual soldier is estimated for military purposes from a minute investigation of a defaulter-sheet in which his slightest shortcomings are recorded, so that the trifling faults and failings of bygone days may be brought against him on any occasion that he forgets to clean his buttons. A glance at a daily paper will suffice to convince us that many who claim higher social standing, and who certainly enjoy greater opportunities and inducements to lead the higher life, have need to look to their buttons, and should congratulate

themselves on their immunity from tell-tale records of previous, and probably forgotten, lapses from perfect rectitude. A civilian has not access to any data that will furnish the means of a just comparison of the soldier's general conduct with his own beyond that afforded by the bearing of soldiers in the streets, and that does not afford sufficient basis upon which to construct an opinion. The study of a single specimen of a species does not always lead to a perfect knowledge of a genus. From the ill-behaved or the riotous in the street we must appeal to their comrades in barracks; otherwise a community will be condemned on the misconduct of an individual, and the man who is a disgrace to his regiment may be too readily mistaken for a genuine representative of his corps.

The comparative darkness in which the soldier's life has hitherto been enshrouded, mainly owing to his segregation, must be held to be injurious to the Service. A better knowledge among all classes of the conditions of life in the ranks would stimulate recruiting, and go far to undermine that unjust prejudice against the life which, until quite recently, found expression in the phrase *gone for a soldier*, as corresponding to the more emphatic declaration *gone to the dogs*. It would probably surprise many, even in this day, to hear that opportunities for the cultivation of the intellectual and moral attributes and virtues are provided the soldier, as well as rations and a red tunic; that physical ability and skill at arms are not acquired at the expense of character and morality. We may admit that some very rough characters find their way to a military depot, but when considering them as trained soldiers we must allow for the improvement effected by the

application of discipline, by education and lessons in self-respect. A belief that the ranks are made up of worthless characters with whom it would be dangerous for respectable young fellows of the middle class, say, to associate, or of drones who have accepted a military career as a last resort when their presence in the busy hive of civil life could no longer be tolerated, still exists in spite of the many improvements and ameliorations which have been made in the soldier's position during recent years. That erroneous impression must be eradicated before such an influx of recruits from the good and middling classes occurs as will permit the belief that the majority are drawn from those sources. The dissemination of accurate particulars relating to the interior economy of military establishments, and of detailed information concerning the daily life and duties of the soldier, would afford a useful basis for comparison with other occupations. How many eligible young men, it may be asked, are lost to the army because the Service is not placed before them as a desirable avenue of employment, but is merely left open to them as a kind of haven to be sought only when all other means of obtaining a livelihood fail?

It must be admitted that soldiers could themselves do much to obtain a proper regard and respect for their order by carefully guarding their conduct when temporarily relieved from the full strictness of regimental control. One drunken, slovenly man brings instant discredit upon his own corps in particular and upon the Service generally; and well-conducted men whose sincere desire it may be to uphold and ensure the good reputation of their profession suffer in the esteem of their civil brethren in consequence. Every member of a corps or

battery could do something towards securing and preserving that respect for the Service which good soldiers have always at heart by endeavouring to restrain their more reckless comrades.

But while admitting that soldiers may, in the past, have given cause for the poor opinion that has prevailed regarding the *morale* of military men as a class, it must be pointed out that improvements in the conditions of service have raised the standard of conduct, and it is to be hoped that the reforms which we are now promised will tend to advance the interests of the Service in that respect. It is not so much a dislike for military life that prevents young men of a superior class offering themselves, as a dread of transfer to civil life with a knowledge of the popular, though absurd, notion that one who has served in the ranks

must of necessity be classed as inferior in every respect to those who have made no break between the school and the office. That he will have fallen out of the running to some extent cannot be denied, but it should be the duty of those in whose interests he has served to endeavour to minimise that evil, so that honourable service should not be the direct cause of failure in life.

The British soldier is at this moment the subject of popular attention, and his business a matter of concern to all persons and parties; but the danger is that with the removal of the cause for his popularity the interest in him will flag, and that more attention will be given to bureaucratic reforms than to improvements in the conditions of Service affecting the rank and file.

ONE WHO HAS SERVED.

